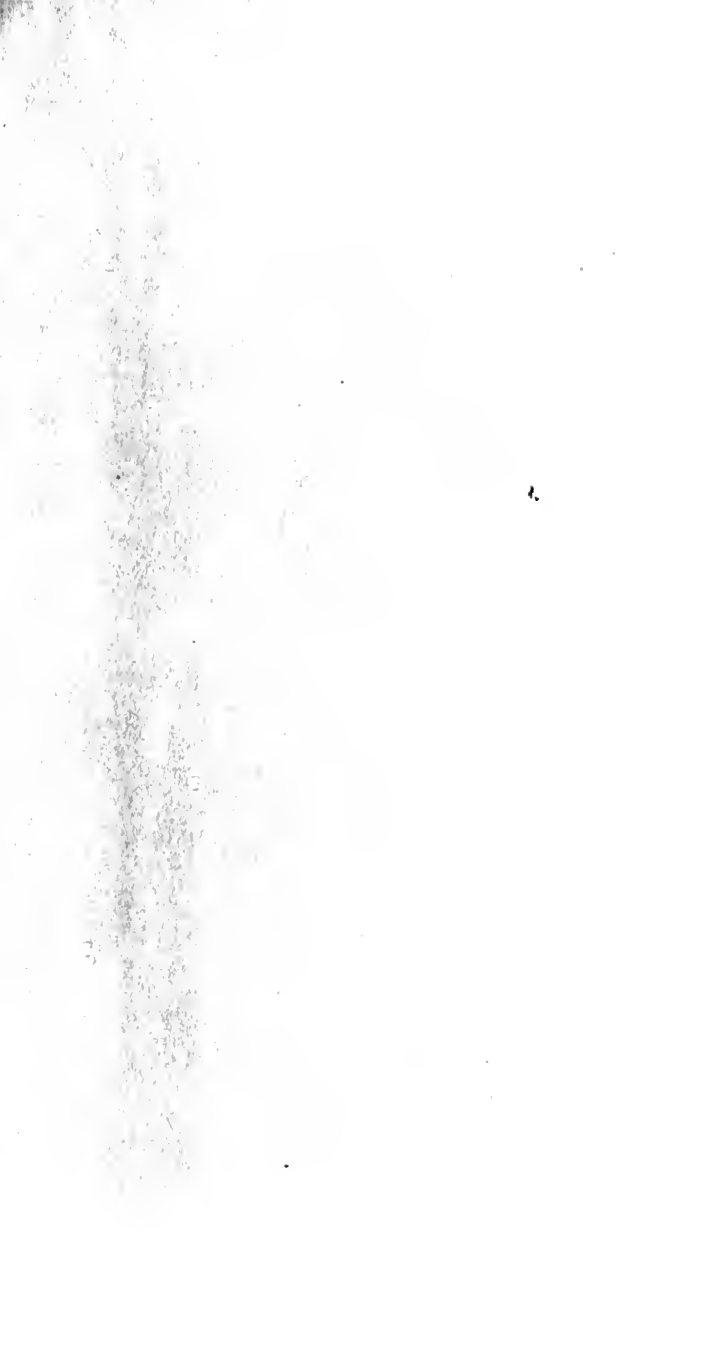


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JOURNAL
OF
A RESIDENCE AND TOUR
IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MEXICO
IN THE YEAR 1826.
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
MINES OF THAT COUNTRY.

BY CAPT. G. F. LYON, R.N. F.R.S.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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TO

JOHN TAYLOR, Esq. F.R.S. F.G.S. &c.

MANAGER OF THE REAL DEL MONTE
AND BOLAÑOS COMPANIES.



MY DEAR SIR,

*IN dedicating to you the following
Journal of my Tour through several of the
Mexican States, I am happy in having it in
my power publicly to express my grateful*

sense of your kindness to me, throughout the official intercourse which took place between us during the period of my engagement in Mexico ; and to subscribe myself,

My Dear Sir,

Your grateful obliged Servant,

G. F. LYON.

THE interest which is felt by the public in all that relates to Mexico, renders me anxious lest the limited quantity of information I am able to communicate should occasion disappointment. It is therefore necessary to state, that the following Journal pretends to nothing more than an account of my personal adventures during a residence of eight months in various parts of that country. Although it does not contain matter of much importance, it is a faithful narrative of what I saw : and I trust it will be found to give a fair representation of the state of the Republic, and to add in

some degree to the very small stock of information which exists respecting the people and general appearance of that portion of the New World.

I have further to regret, that my materials, already too scanty, were rendered more so by the loss of many papers, and the greater part of my collections, in the wreck of the *Panthea*, in which I returned to England.

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RESIDENCE AND TOUR

IN

MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Tampico—Pueblo Viejo—Lake—Easter Festival—Gambling—Lancasterian School—Dinner-party to the General—Ball—Manners—Altamira—Fort—Duties—The Mira—Miseries—Ascend the River Panuco—Ranchos—Petroleum—Village of Panuco—Obsidian Fragments—Figures of Terra Cotta—Remains of ancient race of Indians—Rains—Tanjucó—Ride to San Vicente and San Juan—Return by the River San Juan—Feast of Ascension—Description of the Towns of Tampico.

HAVING been appointed one of the Commissioners for the Real del Monte and Bolaños Mining Companies, I left England on the 8th of January 1826, in the Company's brig *Perseverance*, taking under my charge a large party of

artificers intended for the mines of Real del Monte and Bolaños.

My reasons for undertaking an employment of this nature in a time of profound peace, and at a period when no expeditions of enterprize were going forward, cannot be interesting to the public. I therefore avoid detailing them: and although on my outward passage I wrote some few remarks on Madeira and Jamaica, to divert my thoughts from all I had left behind, it would be equally unnecessary for me to publish them; those places being already too well known to the general reader to require further description.

On the 9th of March, having crossed the Gulf of Mexico, we struck soundings near midnight, and on the 10th saw, from the mast head, the coast near Tampico*; indistinct and low, while in thirty fathoms water. Shoaling to twenty-five fathoms, we then saw the loom of the sand-hills from the deck,

* I mention the soundings on approaching the shore, as they may be important to seamen; although I have more fully described the river Panuco and its Bar, in some notes in the Appendix.

at a distance of about eighteen miles; and having in the afternoon distinctly made out the Bar, we ran for it; and when in six fathoms, a pilot launch came out in answer to our signal guns. The pilot at first refused to take so large a vessel * over the bank,—probably to enhance the value of his services; but he was ultimately persuaded to do so: and we safely passed this impediment, which in charts and books of pilotage is described as being so dangerous. On this day, however, the passage was perfectly smooth, and the break of the sea on the shoal points which bounded it, could scarcely be said to exceed a ripple. Nineteen feet and a half was our shoalest cast,—a most unusual depth,—and the *Perseverance* was said to be the first vessel drawing above twelve feet of water which had ever crossed this continually shifting barrier †.

We had no sooner anchored in the river Panuco, off the little cluster of huts at La Barra, than a crowd of all descriptions of men, women and chil-

* She drew twelve feet and a half.

† See notes on the Bar.—Appendix No. I.

dren hastened on board; and the Custom-house officer, accompanied by a dirty, ragged, ill-looking man, who was styled Captain of the Fort, seemed fully disposed to give us some trouble: but wine and cakes distributed to their families, and cigars to themselves, effected wonders; and at sunset I was permitted to accompany the captain of our vessel to the town of Pueblo Viejo, at which the Commandant resided. Night soon closed on us, and we rowed for above two hours, against a strong current, up a stream of half a mile in width. The sound of our oars aroused the large cranes, herons, egrets, and innumerable other birds from their rest, and they fluttered in blind confusion across the surface of the stream; while myriads of fire-flies were flitting amongst the dark mangroves which dipped their closely woven branches in the water. Tree-frogs and crickets, which abound here, almost deafened us with their shrill thrilling notes; and to add to the delightful novelty of my first evening in America, we were hailed in our own language from an invisible boat,

by a gentleman who, suspecting us to be strangers, offered to pilot us to the town. We soon reached the house of Mr. Robertson the American Consul, to whom we were consigned, and met with a most kind reception. Seeing that we were tired, hungry, and wet with the heavy night dew, he obligingly supplied all our wants, and provided us with beds in his office;—but sleep was quite out of the question. Dogs, pigs, and restless cocks which began crowing at midnight, would in themselves have been sufficient to banish rest from a stranger; but at about 1 A. M. of the 11th, a storm of rain, thunder and lightning set in with great fury, and in a few minutes actual rivers were rushing through the town. This was a severe “Norther,” and we were rejoiced at having entered the river, as, had our vessel anchored outside, it would have obliged her to make an offing, and many days might have elapsed before she could have reached the port again.

In the forenoon I waited on the Commandant, for whom I had dispatches, and then presented to

the Director of the Customs and the Alcalde, the letters of introduction with which I had been favoured by D. Vicente Roccafuerte, charge d'affaires for Mexico, in London.

The Commandant obligingly assured me that "everything he had was at my disposal;" the Alcalde begged me "to believe that he was my servant;" and the chief of the Customs having "kissed my hand, and entreated that I would lay my commands on him," then proceeded to throw some impediments in my way. Mr. Robertson very kindly hired a windowless room for me in one of the most respectable houses in the place, the mistress of which was better known by the name of the Gachupina (a term of reproach applied to European Spaniards) than by her proper appellation of Doña Francesca.

This lady, who had the reputation of being rich and cleanly, was quite distressed at not having time to whiten my room ; but two Indian girls were instantly set to work to wash the earthen floor and make me comfortable. My landlady was all polite-

ness, and I clearly saw that she entertained no mean opinion of her own good breeding and address.

She was generally allowed to be one of the most respectable ladies of Tampico; and although a certain Don Antonio, who assisted in taking care of her shop and her fair self, was by no means her husband, she piqued herself on her irreproachable character, and the high estimation in which she was held on account of her wealth. Her age might have been about forty-five; her person was fat; and when in her morning costume, which consisted of a shift tied round the waist with a string, and with a cigar in her mouth, her whole figure was particularly attractive. This charming person and I formed an interesting picture every morning at about six o'clock, as she stood leaning over a little wicket which kept the pigs, dogs, cats and poultry from coming out of the yard into my room. While we cosily smoked the cigars with which she favoured me, I drew in lessons of Spanish, by conversing with her, and listening to con-

stantly repeated assurances that she was an “old Spaniard” and a woman of sense, although, in common with nearly all the native ladies of the place, she did not possess the accomplishments of reading and writing.

In the evening, the Commandant and his wife, with some officers of the garrison, paid me a visit at the Consul’s house, where his sister amused the party by playing on the piano-forte; and a host of half-naked natives soon crowded round the door and windows, which latter at Tampico have no glass, and seemed highly delighted with the music; some of the children remarking with astonishment, that the Señora “read a book” while playing.

When the visitors retired, I adjourned to my own room, that I might endeavour to sleep,—but it was all to no purpose. At my outer door stood a pig-sty, containing three old sows,—mothers, to my misery, of a numerous progeny, which had been separated from them in order to forage in the odorous streets. The moanings and cries in every tone to which the voice of sows can be modulated,

were answered with interest by the young pigs; for, being too large to creep through the bars to their parents, they solaced themselves by squealing throughout the night. To add to this, the dogs, of which every house has several, barked without interruption.

March 13.—On rowing down to the brig we saw five or six alligators (which are more generally distinguished here by the names of “Lagarto” or “Cayman”) in the water, and others basking in the sun on shore. I landed opposite to one of these in a little creek, and crept cautiously through the high reeds to get a shot at him: when just as I had reached the water’s edge and was preparing to fire, a very large one, on which I had nearly trodden, awoke from his slumbers, and plunged into the water, frightening the other sleeper, and not a little startling me, one of these creatures having very recently killed a woman. On returning home I shot a beautiful rose-coloured spoonbill, and an egret, both of which birds abound here.

March 14.—At the new town of Las Tamaulipas (about three miles to the northward of Pueblo Viejo, and in a different State,) I experienced great difficulties with the Custom-house officers, who would do nothing towards clearing the vessel. Their only working hours at any time were from 9 A. M. to 1 P. M., after which period no entreaties could induce them to move. Even in the very small portion of the day set apart for business, if a cock-fight was to be held, if gambling engaged them, or if they were lazy, duty was very quietly deferred until the morrow, when in all probability the same excuse would be again offered; and as in this land of liberty and equality scolding these people would only make them worse, patience is the best policy, and is one of the greatest blessings which a traveler in the Republic of Mexico can possess.

I this day killed an alligator, but he sunk before I could take firm hold of him. One of our party, however, was more fortunate, and procured a small one of six feet in length.

On the 16th of March I dispatched a party of the

steadiest of the people whom I had brought out, to Real del Monte ; and on the following morning the remainder of the men and two women followed to the same place. It would be in vain for me to attempt describing my feelings of delight, when I saw the tail of the last mule turned towards me, and knew that I had now got rid of all my charge, except three or four of the best conducted amongst them. Only those who have been shut up for two months with a set of mechanics who imagine themselves too good lawyers to be controlled, can at all enter into my feelings on this occasion. Indeed, when it is considered how different is the confinement on board a vessel and the want of occupation, from their usual habits of life, it is to be expected that the charge of superintendence of these people is attended with much trouble.

At the village of Tampico, seven miles to the southward of Pueblo Viejo, I visited with a friend the church, in which we found the old Padre wandering about in a long blue gown, the counterpart of that which Edie Ochiltree is described to have

worn. It being a Saint's day, a number of women were seated on the ground in prayer at the shrines ; some of them having a row of lighted candles stuck in the earthen floor in front of them. The Padre, who appeared and spoke as if very tipsy, took us behind the altar to see an image of our Saviour, which, except on particular feast-days, is never exposed to vulgar gaze. The figure was as large as life, ill-proportioned, of a ghastly yellow colour and having indications of the veins painted black. An apron of red damask, garnished with gold tinsel roses and tawdry ornaments, was tied round the waist, and a wig of immensely long hair covered the shoulders. The whole figure reminded me forcibly of the horrid creation of Frankenstein. It is, however, celebrated for the miracles it has performed : and having, according to the priest, been found by some soldiers so immediately after the Conquest as to do away with all probability of human agency, is considered as being sent from Heaven !

March 18.—On this evening the whole town was

in motion. The officers and their band paraded all the streets, and ultimately centred at the dwelling of the Alcalde or Mayor, who kept one of the most reputable drinking-houses in the town, and rather piqued himself on having as few drunken people gambling on his counter, as were to be found in the shops of any of the other Authorities. It happened to be the eve of his fête, when it is customary at this place to offer the compliments of the season. On the following day, his "dia de nacimiento," the officers of the garrison, in their full uniform and preceded by a discordant band of drums and fifes, marched down at eleven to partake of the feast, to which I also was invited. In the centre of the receiving-room was placed a large table, loaded with the most admired dishes of the country. The delicious fish called Sapo (or frog, from its resemblance to a tadpole) lay floating in an ocean of oil, garlic, pepper, raisins, and other savoury articles. Meats in all sorts of shining pies, and in a variety of stews, abounded; and every little vacancy between the dishes was filled up by a capacious black bottle.

We all stood to partake of the abundant feast “con franqueza;” and compliments having been plenteously bestowed in all directions, a copy of verses was read by the Commandant, informing us that our little round good-humoured host possessed every virtue under the sun. This, with its rejoinder, was the signal to withdraw; and having all wished that the Alcalde “might live a thousand years,” we lighted our cigars and took leave.

March 22.—I procured two of the extraordinary fish which are here called Cuttan, and known to the American seamen as the Alligator Gar, or Gar-fish.

The head and jaws are precisely those of the alligator, and two of the front teeth of the lower jaw protrude through holes in the upper as with that creature. In each side of both jaws were two rows of very strong sharp-pointed teeth, of which the outer were by far the largest, and the rows were separated by a deep groove. The palate also was grooved and of a very hard enamelled bone, and even the short tongue was thus defended. The whole body was

covered with scales of a particularly hard bony nature, and of such strength as scarcely to yield to a strong chisel and hammer. This fish has two ventral, two pectoral, and two anal fins; but no dorsal fin. The fins are small and nearly of an equal size. The eyes prominent, with the faculty of turning in every direction. The fish, which exceeded five feet in length, was considered as a small one of the species, which I should conceive to be of the *Esox*, or Pike genus, from its similarity in some respects to the *E. osseus*.

On the 23rd, a party of us visited some islands in the centre of Tampico Lake, at about seven miles distance from Pueblo Viejo. On rounding the first small woody islet, we glided from the effects of a fresh "Norte" or Norther which was blowing, into a smooth sheltered pool thickly overhung with mangrove and other trees, on which were sitting hundreds of cranes, egrets, rose-coloured spoonbills, brown and blue herons, and various other birds, all as thickly crowded as the tenants of our English rookeries. In shooting our specimens, we alarm-

ed two very large alligators, which could not reach the lake but by walking along an extensive sand-bank; and we were thus enabled to observe them in their clumsy progress, which can very rarely be the case, as they are usually found lying so close to the water's edge that they reach it by one spring. From the small island, on which we procured many hatsful of eggs, we proceeded to another, on the north side of which were innumerable nests of cranes and the roseate spoonbill, each containing two or three nearly fledged young ones. The mangroves are so closely woven together at this place, that there is little difficulty in climbing amongst them, and even walking on their tops. We consequently scrambled about to admire the pink clusters of little spoonbills and the pure white down of the young cranes, all as large as barn-door fowls, and offering the most beautiful contrast imaginable to the deep shining green of the leaves amongst which they were sheltered.

Having completed our collection, we returned home, and I carried with me a couple of young

spoonbills, which soon grew so tame as to come at my call and follow me wherever I chose: but these beautiful creatures died when put on ship-board for a passage to England.

March 24.—In the afternoon of the 24th we most unexpectedly received information of the arrival off the Bar, of General D. Miguel Barragan, Governor of the State of Vera Cruz, of which Tampico is the northern limit; and it was expected that all the authorities should go in full dress to meet him; the American Consul and I receiving an invitation to join the party. This was one of the oddest water-excursions imaginable: there were about eight boats, of all sorts and sizes, crowded with officers in cocked hats and plumes; some aldermen, with a handkerchief as a substitute for a hat; a few of the shopkeepers in full suits of black, and most motley crews of rowers: the whole party, down to the smallest boat-boy, screamed, roared, and gave advice to the Commandant as to the most imposing order in which we should

arrange the squadron to receive the General. He, unfortunately, popped unexpectedly upon us in a short reach of the river, while the boats had formed in a cluster for the purpose of a general ignition of cigars. The great man, however, was happy to avail himself of the flints and steels, and we then returned in state up the stream.

March 25.—I this morning discovered one of the causes of my nightly disturbances; which was, that a large house within a few paces of my door contained no less than twenty game-cocks, each tied by the leg to a short stake planted near a neat mat which served as the roost or bed. These birds were all the property of an alderman, the most scientific and adventurous cock-fighter of the whole corporation.

March 26.—I visited and sounded the Bar on this day*. Several pelicans were fishing on the shoals, and many thousand terns sat clustering in one flock on the northern point. Landing at the little village of La Barra on our return, we found

* See Appendix No. 1.

the General there, and received an invitation to join his party, who presented us with large wine-glasses of poisonous aguardiente.

I was abundantly questioned, and in a few instances with some degree of mistrust and jealousy, as to my motives for examining the Bar, and my opinion whether this formidable barrier admitted of improvement, which was considered as impossible by the whole party. To give them some idea of what skill and labour could accomplish, I described to them the Plymouth Breakwater. When I had done so, a general silence prevailed; and though the company were too polite openly to question my veracity, I could yet plainly perceive that in their hearts they doubted my narrative.

This being Easter-eve, was the first of those days especially set apart for gaming and idleness; and at about 9 o'clock I went to the Plaza (an open space near the church), where I found many hundred people already assembled to amuse themselves. A large circle surrounded by spectators and dancers was expressly set apart for fandangos, which, what-

ever they may be in Spain, are in the New World much inferior in grace and activity to the common African Negro dances ; though the latter, it must be confessed, are usually to the sound of tin pots and empty gourds. Here the music was somewhat better, though not less monotonous ; and consisted of a guitar, a rude kind of harp, and a screaming woman with a falsetto voice. Beyond the fandango stood a range of booths, beneath which, men and women of all descriptions, old and young, rich and poor, officers in full uniform and beggars in rags, were gambling with the most intense interest ; and individuals who from their appearance might be considered objects of charity, were fearlessly staking dollars,—some even adventuring a handful at a time. The favourite game was that called “Chusa,” which is played on a deep saucer-shaped table, and resembles the E. O. of England. All round the Plaza small groups of Indian and other women were seated on the ground with little charcoal fires, at which they occupied themselves in preparing coffee, chocolate, fish, and other eatables ;

while under the Chusa tents, spirits of all kinds were sold in profusion.

March 27.—A gentleman at Tamaulipas permitted me to take drawings of two very perfect Mexican idols. They were of basalt, and had with many others been dug up near the spot; but their companions had met with the usual fate of these interesting objects, having been broken up as building materials! Some European Spaniards who overlooked me as I sketched these figures, could not refrain from showing their amazement at my taking so much trouble about “such ugly things” (*cosas tan feas*),—a remark which soon ceased to astonish me, as subsequently to this period I had frequent opportunities of observing the extreme indifference of the generality of the Spaniards to every thing connected with the history of the aborigines of the country.

When the oppressive glare of the sun had ceased, and the cool evening breeze set in, Doña Francisca announced to me her intention of visiting the Chusa; and inviting me to accompany her, walked

there in great state between D. Antonio and myself, preceded by her three servant-maids, one of whom was in her Indian dress, and had charge of the cigars for her mistress. We found our way to the largest gaming-table; at which Francisca, having elbowed some ragged women off the only bench in the place, established herself in full play. Fine ladies with mock jewels, and women of all shades and colours, with every variety of men, crowded thickly round their favourite game; and my landlady having succeeded in getting the balls into her own hands, became entirely occupied in throwing them with such gestures or turns of the arm as in her opinion would insure success. Before leaving the Plaza, where Francisca remained playing until nearly daylight, I made my way through the crowd to take a last peep at her; and saw a fellow to whom I had paid a real* in the morning for sweeping before my door, and who was almost in rags, standing opposite my fair friend, acting as banker to the table, at which I suppose

* The eighth of a dollar.

he had been successful. He had squeezed a real into his ear "para Fortuna," and ventured his dollars at every turn with the most perfect sang froid. The apparent indifference to losses, and apathy when successful, is very remarkable with all classes of Mexicans: but they gamble so incessantly, that I should conceive all excitement in this dangerous passion must be deadened, and that the love of play at last becomes a disorder rather than an amusement. I have frequently seen a couple of poor porters, who had not a farthing of money, sit gravely down in the dust with a greasy pack of cards, and anxiously stake their respective stocks of paper cigars, until one or the other became bankrupt.

March 28.—I joined the General and a large party in a visit to the newly established Lancasterian school, held in the neatest building in the town, which was purposely constructed for it. Although the establishment had only existed two months, there were already two hundred boys and about twenty girls on the books, many of them not more than four years of age.

The school-room for the boys was large and airy, the forms and desks neatly made of a wood resembling mahogany. Round the white-washed walls were painted, in large black letters, various well selected moral sentences; and the whole establishment wore the appearance of great order and regularity. The master (a native of Madrid) read a long paper to the General on the great advantages to be derived from the school; but few of the party seemed to feel much interest about it. Some of the boys then wrote and read; exhibiting proofs of being far better scholars than most of the authorities who sat in judgement upon them.

The master, who was a quiet well-informed man, gave me much interesting information as to his charge, but complained that the principal people of the town afforded him little assistance.

The Bible, in Spanish, is permitted to the children unconditionally; but it appears that few, either of the old or young in Mexico, are inclined to read it. It is indeed to be expected, that amongst a people to whom information on all subjects

has so long been denied, and whose religion is framed from legends of which European Catholics have never heard,—the Bible in its pure simplicity should not appear to bear the stamp of truth, and that the few selections from it should have been warped entirely to the purposes of keeping a naturally tractable and very credulous race of men in a state of blindness in religious matters, bordering but too closely on idolatry.

March 29.—I dined with a party of thirty-five at the house of a native merchant, who gave a “convite” in honour of the General. The eating part of the entertainment, which occupied above three hours, was served up in one or two dishes at a time: but we had scarcely been seated ten minutes, before a “bomba” was proclaimed; and other toasts followed in rapid succession, generally in verse. It was extremely amusing to watch the progress of a sentiment, which I at first imagined was from the feeling of the moment,—but no such thing: a gentleman would rise suddenly on his legs, with an air of the greatest enthusiasm, would

wave his hand above his head with a joyous shout, and proclaim a "bomba!" All the party would then rise to second this animating burst; while bumpers were filled and silence was obtained: after this, the proposer of the toast would very gravely produce from his waistcoat pocket a ready-made copy of verses, which not being of his own composing he could not very easily read; and then, all having loudly cheered this genuine son of Anacreon, the company would sit down until a similarly bright and equally original sally was made by another of the party. Unfortunately, on this festive occasion all the verses, and there were at least thirty, turned on the same subject: pompous, overstrained compliments to the "Invincible" the "Immortal" "The Hero of the Age, General Barragan;" or, "To the Success of the Mexican Republic, the Envy and Admiration of the World!"—I was most heartily rejoiced when, at 8 o'clock, all this ceremony was over. We were then enabled to go, in good time, to a ball at the drinking-shop of the cock-fighting al-

derman, who did not, however, honour us by his presence. I know not what music we had at the ball,—the performers, certainly not of Colinet's band, being hidden in a crowd of Indians and idle people who stood in the court-yard.

The ladies, who at Tampico had not at this time arrived at the refinements of any kind of stays or gloves, sat in a stiff formal line at one end of the room, all smoking very seriously, while at the other the gentlemen also solaced themselves with the same ball-room luxury. The General, who had been much in the more polished parts of Mexico, looked rather bewildered on being pressed to dance; but complied with the wishes of the company, and swam through the labyrinths of a Spanish dance with a most woe-begone countenance.

Following his great example, I did the same; but with no great success,—my partner, a very active shrivelled little old woman, being so provoked at my inability to exhibit her graces to advantage, as very unceremoniously to leave me standing in

the middle of the room, while she retired in high wrath to a corner, and sought consolation in a cigar.

March 30.—A gentleman at Las Tamaulipas very courteously presented me with several small figures and imitations of Indian weapons carved in bone: these, with a skeleton, had recently been dug up in sinking the foundation for a house in this new town, which, as I have elsewhere remarked, is evidently on the site of one of the Indian cities discovered here by Juan de Grijalva. I subsequently received from the same gentleman a little idol in terra cotta, which was found on the day he brought it, in digging a well. It was similar to others which I procured in Panuco, and the face and head-dress in all the specimens resembled each other in an extraordinary degree.

Having dined with the Commandant, and seen the poor modest General sadly persecuted with compliments, I accompanied him and our entertainer to the Chusa, at which the Commandant (a colonel in the army and governor of Tampico)

soon found his way to the table where his lady and my friend Francisca sat playing with great animation. In a moment this high official character was deeply engaged in betting and staking his dollars with all the ragamuffins whom I have already described as frequenting the Chusa. The boatmen and cargadores rather predominated at his table; but they ventured deeply against him, and in so doing lost much of their money. The General, meanwhile, rambled about in the crowd in a large gold-laced hat lined with black ostrich feathers, bearing in his hand a tumbler of aguar-diente, which he offered to all his acquaintance, to whom he also presented the cigars he had purchased from time to time at the booths. The great familiarity of manners amongst the Mexicans may appear to strangers as the effects of the recent changes and assumption of a republican form of government; while in fact it is adopted from the custom of Old Spain, where the domestics, bred up from generation to generation in the same house, inherit all the privileges of familiar

intercourse. With this foundation, society in New Spain is far more debased than in the mother-country, owing to the cruel state of ignorance in which it has been the policy of Spain to keep its Transatlantic subjects. It may be plainly perceived, therefore, that the equality of education, breeding, and knowledge of the world, have brought the beggar and the noble on joking terms together. Things must now rapidly improve: and when the women are allowed their proper station in society; when the female children are restrained from playing in the streets, or with the dirty persons who act in the capacity of cooks; and when stays and ablutions are introduced, and cigars forsaken by the softer sex, the manners of the men will be materially changed. In the southern provinces, the effects of free intercourse with Europe have altered not only the forms of society and dress, but have given to the manners of the better classes a degree of polish which will speedily be imitated by their more rustic neighbours.

General Barragan was a mild obliging man, who, instead of proffering attentions according to the established forms, did all in his power to serve his friends; and he afforded me assistance whenever I required it, with a cordiality which is not often to be met with in Mexico.

April 1.—Having learnt by a letter from a party who had been sent forward to Zacatecas, of their detention by the Alcalde of Altamira, I rode there to arrange matters; and the impediments arising from a little overstretch of power being removed, the people had permission to proceed forward on the morrow. When this business was settled, the Alcalde, who owned the only little public-house in the place, was very attentive, and took me to the top of the church, of which he is the head chorister. Hence I obtained a view of the Lake, and the neglected, forsaken town of Altamira,—once so crowded and of such commercial importance, but now containing scarcely more than one hundred souls, the inhabitants

having removed to the new and rapidly rising town of Tamaulipas.

April 2.—It was a delicious morning when I left Altamira; and the fresh dew, as it rapidly evaporated under the first rays of the morning sun, gave out all the sweets it had imbibed from the wilderness of flowers. Nothing indeed could exceed the fragrance exhaling from the woods for the first two hours of the day. Its fineness had called forth some beautiful varieties of small snakes, many of which, of an exquisitely brilliant green colour, were gliding about the pathways. I now saw the smaller Mexican pheasant, and the cries of the chachalaca resounded from every part of the forest.

The distance between Tampico and Altamira is about seven leagues. In the afternoon I received a visit from a very extraordinary posture-master, a little fellow of about forty years of age, with a countenance alarmingly like that of a baboon. Enormous ears stood at right angles with his head,

which was thinly covered with single crisp brown hairs: his figure was almost deformed, yet his attitudes were certainly equal to those exhibited by Mazurier.

A Mexican man-of-war brig and two schooners anchored off the Bar in the afternoon, when I had an opportunity of seeing some of the officers of the incipient navy of the Republic.

April 3.—On crossing for Tamaulipas I shot the largest alligator I had yet seen, and which could not have measured less than twelve feet. On being struck, the blood spouted copiously from its wound, and the air became strongly impregnated with a pungent odour of musk. As this creature slid from the bank into the water while struggling in death, I saw no more of it until the following day, when its carcase, half bared by the vultures, was lying on a sand-bank, and in a state too offensive to be approached. I lamented not having obtained the skin of this creature, as it was of a bluish black colour; while the usual hue of the Tampico cayman is a brownish green.

April 5.—In an expedition down to the Bar, I paid a visit to the Castillo, or Fort, which is placed at its southern side. It is a small space rudely surrounded by upright stakes planted in the sand: their height is about that of a man. Vacancies are left on a level with the ground; and five guns, of as many different calibres, frowned through these embrasures. First appeared an iron six-pounder carronade on a ship-carriage; next was a long twelve, with a similar mounting; by its side stood a small brass field-piece on high wheels; and last of all, a venerable nine-pounder showed its honey-combed muzzle. Of all these engines of war, the brass swivel was the only one not choked with rust: yet the natives consider the Castillo as a “place of proof;” and it was originally constructed for the purpose of intimidating a French squadron which some time since was expected to appear on the coast to assist the Royalists!

When I peeped over the stakes at the fortress, the officer of the guard rose hastily in his blanket, cried “*Vigilancia*” in a tone of thunder to a slum-

bering Indian soldier who was lolling in the burning sunshine, and then proceeded to inform me that no strangers were permitted to look into the castle. I could not avoid assuring him that I was not going to take any hints from it; and then at a respectful distance made a sketch of this very curious place,—not, however, without interruption; an Indian soldier having somewhat peremptorily notified to me, that no one was allowed to write a “description” of the Fortaleza, without permission of the government.

April 7.—Amongst my other duties I attended at the Custom-house at Tamaulipas to pass ten thousand dollars which we had brought with us; but learnt with astonishment that no money coined abroad could be landed! Dollars of every part of Southern America are prohibited, or at all events considered as not proper to be introduced; and even the Spanish pillar-dollar is objected to. Our agent and myself were required to enter into a bond relative to this money, “that if at any *future period* the government

should impose a duty on the importation of dollars, we should be liable to pay it." In consequence, however, of this singular clause, we entered the money as landed for exportation, sold it to advantage, and it was re-embarked by the purchaser without paying the three per cent exportation duty, which would otherwise have been due to the state. I mention this as one of the many impolitic laws relative to the public revenue, which is further prejudiced by the import duties on every article of commerce, amounting at this period to about thirty-five per cent, exclusive of still further Internacion duty to the amount of twenty-five more.

The consequence of this measure, has been the introduction of a regulated system of smuggling; for conniving at which, each class of officers of the Customs had its stated fees: by these *douceurs* the purposes of the merchants were fully answered, and at least half of the established duties saved to them, while but a small proportion of benefit accrued to the revenue of the state *.

* An administrador of the Customs, whose salary was one

April 9.—We rode this evening to the Mira, or Look-out, which is on a thickly wooded hill at the back of Pueblo Viejo, and commands a view of the sea and outer surf of the Bar. A delightful view of inland scenery,—a portion of the River Panuco, and the wide-extending Lake of Tampico,—is also obtained; while the New and Old towns, with the vessels at anchor off Tamaulipas, form a coup d'œil, which of its kind is unequalled in any part of Mexico. There are two small bamboo huts on the eastern side of the hill inhabited by Indian families, who support themselves by the sale of a beverage expressed from the sugar-canes, of which they have a small plantation. It is the custom of all classes at Pueblo Viejo to make their Sunday evening's lounge to the Mira and drink this liquor, which, though very inferior to Pulque*, is in great request. On this day the beautiful wood was much

thousand two hundred dollars per annum, retired at this period, after about eight months official residence, with one hundred thousand dollars!

* This is only procured in the more temperate regions of the table land.

crowded with pedestrians, winding amongst the intricate and shady mazes of the thicket. Indians with their families, half-casts, negroes, and creoles, in great variety of gay costumes, rendered the picture extremely pleasing. Here and there the tinkling of the small Indian guitar, or joyous songs by parties who carried fruit and provisions for their evening feast under the trees, gave an indescribably lively character to the scene, heightened as it was by the large flights of bright green parrots and parroquets, the restless cardinals and crimson-crested woodpeckers, with many other beautiful varieties of birds, all in happy activity as the burning sun retired.

April 11.—After having lived for a length of time in noise and misery at Pueblo Viejo, I at length succeeded in lodging myself at Tamaulipas, in a large white-washed barn, consisting of one room; for which, without a single article of furniture, I paid two dollars and a half per diem, and was congratulated on having found so cheap a lodging in the New Town. I am not intending to

be fastidious, neither am I one who complains of lodging, diet, or other inconveniences to be met with in the ordinary course of things; yet anything was happiness to me after the constant noises at Francisca's: and I noted with great satisfaction the first entire night's rest which I enjoyed uninterrupted by dogs or cocks since arriving in the country. Hogarth's "Enraged Musician" never suffered more than I had done, in consequence of the utter impossibility of enjoying one quiet hour to attend to my business. I may be pardoned for giving some description of my troubles, in order to show that, with every disposition to accommodate myself to circumstances, it was quite impossible to sit easy under such a constant din. The back door of my room, which supplied the place of a window, opened into a yard in which eighteen hens and numerous chickens were wont to ramble. A horse tied to a tree neighed at intervals to its two responsive fellow-servants in a small open stable. Four dogs, of various voices and most provoking tempers, growled and barked constantly

at each other, or at five starvling cats and their kittens, from daylight until sunset, and from dark again until morning. The projecting eaves of the house formed a kind of covered way, to protect Doña Francisca from the sun,—sheltering also one of my greatest torments. On a pole, suspended by a rope at each end, swung a favourite parrot, which talked incessantly, and very much in the same key as its mistress. Patches of Spanish songs, terms of insult and opprobrium, expressions of endearment, curses, and orisons to the Virgin, succeeded each other in a rapidity of utterance altogether peculiar to the mistress and the bird. It was also my fate to hear two young Indian women and a little talkative girl grind maize, slap tortillas, sing, gossip and laugh abundantly, within two yards of my door; and at meal-times, the smell and sound of fish and other viands frying in oil was added to the harmony. Francisca, of whose tones words can give no idea, had adopted a sickly, yellow, and fretful little child, with a perpetual scream and constant restlessness. The squallings

of this poor infant, which were faithfully imitated by the parrot, elicited alternately, coaxings, scoldings and whippings from its madrina; and the general result was, that the wretched baby on being turned as a punishment into the yard, would creep in and sob in one corner of my little room. I say nothing of the pigs and a kid or two, which, unhappily for me, had excellent lungs, or of Don Antonio's constant squabbles about politics with a sickly fellow-lodger of mine, who, when not otherwise occupied, dropped in to tell me of all his ailments. But when I add to this list of miseries the insufferably powerful fangs of the fleas, bugs, mosquitos, sand-flies and garrapatos*, which feasted upon me in those moments when I most required rest, my situation may be easily imagined.

On the morning of the 14th of April I left Las Tamaulipas with my servant Marriot and one of the Company's men, in a fine large canoe formed

* A small kind of tick, which in great numbers bury their heads in the skin and are very difficult of extraction.

of a single tree, and proceeded on the examination of the River Panuco, of which so little has been hitherto known. We started with a light sea-breeze up this beautiful stream, and our general rate of progress through the water was about two miles and a half in the hour. Our two canoe-men rarely paddled the boat, or entered the centre of the stream, unless when sailing; but at all other times pushed it forward by putting their oars to the bottom, and keeping for that purpose close to the bank. A portion of the stern part of our canoe was covered with an odd kind of awning, to shelter us from the broiling sun by day and the heavy dews of the night. This was composed of a rough frame of green sticks, bent from side to side of the boat, and covered with three fresh bullocks' hides, the smell of which while drying over our heads was particularly offensive; they afterwards became stiff and semi-transparent, and the sun's rays penetrated to such a degree as to make us fancy ourselves exotic plants undergoing the process of forcing. To add to our discomfort, the awning was so low as not

to admit of our sitting upright under it. The banks on either side the river were thickly and luxuriantly covered with small trees and shrubs; and at the end of about twelve miles from our outset we came to the commencement of the Rancho de San Pedro. The name "Rancho" is in this country applied to the large pasture districts in which horses and cattle roam almost wild; and when they are wanted, either for the market, for taming, or other purposes, they are driven into inclosures, or caught by mounted horsemen with the Laso.

This process is already too well described by Captain Basil Hall for me to say more about it. The people who attend to these Ranchos are called "Rancheros" and "Vaqueros," and are a fine, active, athletic race of men; much more simple and well-mannered than those who live amongst the busy world. A Rancho "de Ganado" is a cattle farm; "de Cavallada" or "Mulada," for horses or mules; and "de Ganado menor," for sheep and goats. "Haciendas" may

be more properly called immense farms: grain is cultivated on them; but at the same time the rearing of cattle in great abundance is not neglected. The lands are generally surrounded by stone walls: a kind of village is established round the granaries and dwelling of the owner or his administrador; and every Hacienda is obliged by law to maintain a church on the estate. On the low lands towards the Tampico coast there are few or no Haciendas, and Ranchos alone are to be found near the river.

Passing for some time the banks of San Pedro, we came to the Estero de Chila, another extensive rancho, the cattle of which were either grazing or lying under the shade of the trees close to the water's edge. On this estate, at about three or four miles from the river, is a large lake, from whence I understand that the petroleum which is brought in great quantities to Tampico is collected. It is here called Chapopote, and is said to bubble from the bottom of the lake, and float in great quantities on the surface. That which I saw at

different times was hard and of good appearance, and was used as a varnish, or for covering the bottoms of canoes; the general price was four reals (half a dollar) for a quintal (100 pounds). We had seen at least thirty alligators in this day's journey; and off Chila passed three large turtles, which could not have weighed less than two hundred weight each. To our great regret these creatures were awake, so that we were unable to strike them. We also saw one solitary wild turkey; and shot a few birds, of a sort quite new to me. At sunset we landed, and pitched our tent on a bank near the Rancho del Caracol (or snail), where we could purchase nothing but a leathery cheese and some garlic. Inland of our resting-place lay a wide-extended plain, having a few huts prettily situated under some distant trees, and several lakes, round which numerous cattle were feeding. A number of horsemen were distributed about the plain, collecting the stragglers into groups for the night, and whirling their unerring lasos round the heads of the animals, to enforce obedience.

Myriads of mosquitos kept us awake the whole night, and we rose at dawn of day, April 15, but the herdsmen were already out before us scouring the plains in chase of the milch cows, which they drove at a full gallop into folds near us, while women were waiting to tie their hind legs and milk them: after this they were set at liberty till the following day. The cows in Mexico are milked only once in the twenty-four hours; and from the wandering life they lead, and the little trouble taken about them, yield but a small proportion of milk, and that of very inferior quality. Soon after pursuing our route, and just as the sun had burst forth in all its power, we met a canoe laden with oranges; and I gladly purchased a supply of this refreshing fruit, which is brought down the river from Tamasinchate, a voyage of four or five days for canoes descending with the current. Before noon, the sea-breeze, the greatest imaginable luxury in the Tierra Caliente, set very strongly up the river, and we sailed delightfully before it, discovering as we advanced fresh beauties at every turn of the stream. The varieties of new and magnificent trees, cover-

ed with the most luxuriant and brilliant parasitical plants, dipping their branches in the current; withering trunks clothed with a verdure not their own, but which flourished on their decay; and the immense up-rooted timber lying grounded in the shoaler parts of the stream, and causing strong eddies amongst their shattered branches,—gave a character to the scene around which to me was altogether new and enchanting. Here we saw the hanging-nests of the calandria and many bright-plumed birds. Lime and lemon-trees, bearing at the same time fruit and flowers, hung most invitingly over the water, and afforded us abundance of refreshing lemonade. In some places, immense willows threw their cool shade over smooth banks, resembling very closely the park scenery on the borders of the Thames; while groups of cattle grazing or sleeping beneath thin spreading branches, rendered these particular views so like home, that it was fortunate we had some other objects to remind us how far we were removed from it. Here an enormous alligator would plunge into the river from his

broken sleep on the sunny bank; or a delicate white heron would rise alarmed on the wing, and soar above our heads when affrighted from her retreat amongst the rushes. We saw also on this day a manati, or sea-cow, but it was out of the reach of our shot; and I killed a water-snake as thick as my wrist, while it lay sleeping in the sun on a branch of a decayed tree. To add to the picturesque of our evening scenery, we came up at sunset with an American schooner, which lay becalmed in one of the short reaches while on her way to Panuco for a cargo of fustic (dye-wood). We were at this time abreast of the Rancho del Aguacate, near which the cultivation of maize, the only grain of this part of Mexico, appeared to commence; and as night closed in we passed several Indian huts surrounded by it. We sailed slowly on with a light breeze, near banks quite illuminated by the fire-flies, and the wailing and cries of the solitary night birds gave a peculiar solemnity to the evening; when our ears were suddenly enlivened by the merry sounds of a fiddle and a guitar, proceeding from

a small canoe, which glided swiftly past us, and was carrying this little band to a fandango about to be given at one of the Ranchero's huts.

April 16.—We slept a few hours this night in our canoe, which was hung to the bushes at the bank of Topila. At twilight we again moved forward: the morning was cool and hazy, the thermometer being only at 70°; and when the day cleared up, we landed at a Rancho, in a long reach of seven miles, called Torno Paciencia, where we breakfasted on milk. The banks on this day's journey had become very steep and sandy, and the small timber began to give place entirely to very large trees. In the forenoon we passed a small island rich in Indian corn, standing seven or eight feet in height, with pompions and water-melons, some of which we purchased. I afterwards learnt, when too late to take advantage of it, that a very ancient statue was to be seen at this place. Opposite the island is an establishment, formed three years since by some Americans as a distillery of Aguardiente from the sugar-cane. It was at this

period at work. Near this we saw two manati at a distance in the river. The thermometer at noon in the shade was 83° , and in the sun 94° . At 8 P.M. we rounded a point thickly planted with maize, and came in sight of the village of Panuco, situated on a high bank, the prettiest spot I had then seen in the country. On approaching the landing-place we nearly ran the canoe over a naked woman, who was standing up to her neck in the river. I afterwards learnt that many of the brown sex of this place were excellent swimmers, and that all the natives bathed without the least dread of alligators; these creatures for some unaccountable reason seldom appearing here, although they abound lower down, and are also in great numbers higher up the stream.

While unloading the canoe, two of my friends, who had ridden from Tampico (about forty-five miles) to pass the day with me, arrived, and I procured with great difficulty two small dark rooms in a mud hut. Our search for food and firing then commenced; but neither meat nor wood could we

procure for three hours, and we were still longer in obtaining forage for the horses of my visitors. All the town seemed wrapt in a torpid kind of sleep. Money, scolding, and entreaty,—all were tried in turn; but nothing could induce a single soul to assist us. At length, to the honour of the sex be it spoken, a Campeachy female, who had recently awakened from her long Siesta, and had opened her shop door, called me to her, and offered wood, and words of consolation, both of which were gratefully accepted; a few yards of Tasajo, or jerked beef, being produced at the moment, a warm supper was cooked for us. In the mean time I waited on Don Fernando de San Pedro, a very great man, to whom I had letters of introduction, in each of which was particularly mentioned my anxiety to see any objects of interest which might exist in this place, such as Indian antiquities or natural productions of the country. I had been informed by several people at Tampico that a great number of very curious idols were to be found on this person's estate, though the owner of these trea-

tures appeared himself quite ignorant of his riches, and scarcely knew what was meant by "Antiquities," still less by the term "Idol." He was however all graciousness, and permitted me to roam about and make whatever discoveries I might wish. One of my canoe-men was of far more assistance in my research; and his first prize was an odd grotesque-looking figure in terra cotta, used as a child's plaything, for which I was to pay a quarter of a dollar.

Having thoroughly fatigued ourselves by the ramble through the town, we were glad to retire to rest, and still more pleased to learn that there were no mosquitos in Panuco; and I lay down in peace, for the first time since landing in Mexico.

April 17.—My visitors left me early to return to Tampico, and after breakfast I carried a letter of introduction to the Cura, who received me most kindly, and was the means of my passing a very agreeable day. This worthy priest was an intelligent lively man, of about fifty years of age, liberal in his ideas, and ready to give me every as-

sistance and information in his power. His views respecting the state of the country as to society and morals, and the necessity of educating the poor, were just and reasonable, and he assured me that I should find many of the secular clergy equally zealous in the cause of improvement as himself. He laid before me the last census of his little cure, and told me that any other papers relative to the Indians, or the "Gente de Razon," were quite at my service. With this kind guide I again visited Don Fernando, in whose house itself the Padre soon found a curious idol for me to copy. I had no sooner commenced my drawing, than it excited so much astonishment that half-a-dozen grotesque figures and vases were quickly brought to me; Don Fernando himself presenting me with a little bird-shaped whistle of earthenware, having two holes on each side, so that a kind of tune might be produced from it. I now found full occupation for the day, and a whole group of children were sent out in search of toys, which I agreed to purchase at a medio (three-pence each). In addition

to my acquisitions of this kind, I obtained permission to copy many others, which the owners valued too highly as playthings for their children to part with. The streets of Panuco are to this day thickly strewed with the remains of ancient crockery; and often, after heavy rains, entire vessels and toys are found washed down the water-courses.

In the evening of this day, after the hour of Siesta, I sought out my friend the Padre, who it appeared had been busy in my service, and he gave me three most curious little figures. He also took me to examine a very perfect earthen flute; but the boy to whom it belonged could not be persuaded to part with it. We walked afterwards to see the remains of what the Padre informed me were once Pyramids, and to which the name "Cue*" is still applied, although they are now nothing more than five or six mounds of earth, of thirty or forty feet in height. They lie to the westward of the town,

* This was the term by which the Pyramids were distinguished at the time of the Conquest.—Vide Bernal Diaz, Clavigero, and others.

near each other, and on the plain around them I found several pieces of obsidian arrow-heads, which must have been brought from a great distance* by the warriors who once peopled the banks of the river.

Hence we proceeded through the thickets to several small muddy ponds, where the exhalations are very unhealthy; and although the labour of a few days would suffice to fill up all these places, such is the indolence of the natives that they prefer the annual attacks of fevers and agues, to the trouble of endeavouring to remove their existing causes. I here, for the first time, saw the fruit of the wild pine—Piña del Cardon, or Basuchi,—which is found in a cluster of light yellow plum-shaped fruits, with thick skins, and each containing a small fresh juicy pulp, having a number of seeds mixed with it. This if eaten in any quantity excoriates the mouth very painfully, but is deemed a whole-

* From Pelados near Real del Monte, where there were mines, or rather pits, sunk on the vein of this mineral; or from Cinapecuaro, a day's journey from Valladolid.

some febrifuge when mingled with water. Having rambled through the outskirts of the village, where I picked up many more fragments of obsidian, we went to see a very gigantic Banyan, or Indian Fig-tree, which, situated on a high bank, had thrown down some of its monstrous trunks to the edge of the river beneath ; and vessels in need of careening always "hove down" to them. Near this fine specimen were some parched ill-cultivated gardens, where the plantains alone were flourishing. The owner of one of the gardens most graciously presented me with four turnips and one long leafy cabbage, all considered as great rarities, and he also treated the Padre and myself to orangeade and cigars.

At my return home, after dark, I found one of my boat-men in sad tribulation. He informed me that people were coming to imprison him, until he should pay one hundred dollars to the widow of a man whom he had stabbed and killed some months before in a quarrel.

To Englishmen this may seem a very slight pe-

nalty, but it is a far heavier one than is usually inflicted even on the most cruel murderers in the northern states; the general punishment at this period being confinement, or sentence of confinement for a few days, from which in many instances the delinquent is permitted to escape and perpetrate fresh enormities.

April 18.—This was one of the hottest days* I had at this time experienced in the Tierra Caliente, and I was happy in any excuse to stay at home and copy antiquities. The Padre sent me as a present, several curious ancient toys and whistles, with one small terra cotta vase very beautifully carved with those peculiar flourishes introduced in the Mexican manuscripts. I was also fortunate enough to procure an antique flute of a very compact red clay, which had once been polished and painted. It had four holes, and the mouth part was in the form of a grotesque head.

In the evening, while on my way to thank the Cura for his attentions, I met a party of soldiers

* Thermometer 8 A. M. 80°; Noon 86°; In the sun 104°.

conducting several young men to join the troops at Tampico. They had been forcibly carried away from a fandango, (which by the way is an excellent place for judging of the activity and capabilities of a youth,) and lodged in the common prison until a sufficient number of subjects had been collected. There were fourteen of these unwilling recruits, whom I saw carried off in two canoes so very small that there was but just room for them and their guards to squat down in the bottom without upsetting the boats. Not one of them had a change of clothes or a blanket to cover him, although going a two-days journey down the river, in this crowded state, and in the commencement of the rainy season. Until reaching the water-side they were tied together by ropes, like led horses going to a fair: and of the crowd who witnessed their embarkation, I was in all probability the only person who considered it an extraordinary spectacle, in a time of perfect peace and in a country frantic on the subject of liberty and equality.

April 19.—It rained and thundered, as is usual

in this part of the world, tremendously all night, and at daylight of the 19th we left Panuco to proceed on our examination of the river. Having frequently seen the priest and the best-informed men of the place, I had been enabled to collect something of its history; and on this day knew not a better method of employing my time under a meridian heat, than by retiring beneath the canoe covering of bullocks' hides, and putting on paper the little information I had obtained.

The Panuco, which Cortes conquered with so much expense of lives and treasure*, must unquestionably have stood on the spot occupied by the present town. At the period of the conquest of Mexico it was a place of such importance, that the great captain petitioned Charles the Fifth to add its government to that of New Spain, or Mexico, of which it was, and ever had been, independent. Obtaining his desire, a garrison was placed in the chief town, which was named "San Esteban del Puerto†," an appellation now no longer existing,

* Bernal Diaz.

† Ibid.

although Saint Stephen is still the patron saint, and the ancient name is the only one at present used. The descendants of the warlike people who formerly inhabited the “numerous populous towns on the banks of the river”* yet dwell in the neighbourhood, but in very diminished numbers. In their mild dejected countenances no trace is seen of their being the offspring of those warriors who defeated Grijalva their first discoverer, Garay, and the troops of Cortes, who did not effect their subjugation without great loss of men, and at an expense of 60,000 dollars†, an enormous sum in those days. Time and the tremendous periodical rains have been insufficient to destroy all vestiges of the Guastecas nation. The remains of the pyramids, the quantities of obsidian weapons, the idols, and the utensils, toys and ornaments in finely worked clay,—all combine to show that the arts once flourished to a very considerable extent on this now thinly peopled spot. Some of the vases yet retain their colours and vitreous glazing, and

* B. Diaz.

† Ibid. vol. iv. p. 30.

many are of an earth as light and well baked as that of Tuscany ;—while the figures, from their singular attitudes and grotesque expression, might serve as models to the toy-makers of the present day. The flutes, single and double, with two, three or four holes, the oddly shaped pipes and whistles, and the jars modelled into birds, toads, and other animals—all in Terra cotta *, exhibit as much humour as ingenuity, and are found either entire or broken, in such quantities as to induce a belief that Panuco was actually a mart for crockery-ware. I learnt also that at a Rancho, called Calondras, about nine leagues from the town, some very interesting objects of antiquity are to be met with, situated on the side of a hill covered with wild pines. The principal of these is a large oven-like chamber, on the floor of which a great number of the flat stones, similar to those still used by women in grinding maize, were found, and can even now be procured. It is only in the month of May that this place is accessible ; as the pines being dry,

* Loza de Barro.

may then be burned from the face of the hill. It is conjectured that these stones, with a quantity of other imperishable articles of household furniture long since removed, had been deposited in the cave on some flight of the Indians, as being too heavy for further removal.

There still exist at Panuco two Indian “comunidades*,” amongst whom the Guastec language, to the almost total exclusion of the Spanish, is spoken. These poor people live unmixed with the whites, who amount to 1500 persons, and who may be called the fixed population. During the unhealthy months many families come here from Tampico; and in the dry season Panuco is a kind of watering-place, to which people resort for the

	Families.	Souls.
* These are Tānsalichōk, containing	138	= 525
Tānquinām	78	= 283
At Tanjuco, nine leagues from Panuco, } and appertaining to its Cure, are also }	30	= 101
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	246	= 909

Making a total pure Indian population of 909: a fearful diminution from a nation which according to report once amounted to 100,000.

purpose of bathing, the river here being more free from Caymans than at any other part. For such families as choose to devote a little trouble and expense to decency, small spaces are staked off near the banks, and lightly covered with palm branches : but such niceties are not much attended to ; both sexes bathe without scruple at the same time, and many of the young women swim extremely well.

The town is situated on the southern bank of the river, and was at this time of year at an elevation of thirty feet above it ; but in a more advanced period of the rainy season, which had now commenced, the waters frequently inundate the streets ; and it has more than once happened, that canoes have plied there. Many of the houses are comparatively good, but by far the greater proportion are of split bamboo, plastered with mud, and thatched with the fan palm, which is also the covering of the best buildings. There is neither a school nor any other public establishment in the town.

It would perhaps be difficult even in this universally lethargic country, to find a more listless, idle set of half-sleepy people than those of Panuco, who for the greater part are Creoles. Surrounded by a soil capable of the highest cultivation, living near a river absolutely swarming with the finest fish, they have scarcely a vegetable, and rarely any other food than Tortillas of maize, and occasionally a lump of Tasajo or jerked beef. The Siesta appears to consume half the day, and even speaking is an effort to this lazy race. Such as are obliged to labour in order to save themselves from starving, obtain their livelihood by cutting dye-woods to freight the vessels which occasionally come up the river for a cargo. These woods are the Moral or Fustic, which sells at four reals the quintal. Sarsaparilla at two reals the aroba, and a wood called Palo Azul, or Blue Wood, which has lately been introduced as an article of commerce, and according to its chemical treatment yields three or four fine tints. All these are brought in from the surrounding forests, yet firewood and

charcoal can scarcely be procured in the town. The latter is sold at an exorbitant price, owing to the want of energy in the natives, who prefer receiving it by an eighty miles water conveyance (from Tampico), rather than burning it themselves within fifty yards from their own town.

There are two churches at Panuco, of which the largest is an immense thatched barn-like building, possessing the merit of being so arranged as only to exhibit one Saint: the Redeemer, however, is excluded with those which are rejected ! This is a plan of the Cura, who has determined that the new cedar altar-piece shall only contain a niche for the patron, San Esteban, who from the time of the conquest had been the especial protector of the town. The church has a large and a small bell, placed under a little shed in its front; and on the opposite side of the Plaza stands the Capilla de la Virgen de Dolores, which was founded, and is yet supported, by a body of pious women, who style themselves "The Sisters of Dolores." They are secular, and form a kind of female corporation.

Each sister pays an annual subscription of thirteen reals, for which at her decease she has the privilege of being buried in the chapel; and her immediate relations receive for her either a shroud or twelve dollars and a half, with two dozen wax candles: the former of these the priest secures for the benefit of the departed soul, and the latter are burned round the body.

Panuco is considered a very healthy place in comparison with the other towns on the low lands; yet the fever and vomito occasionally make their appearance, although with diminished violence. The temperature is generally said to be very equal, but hail has sometimes fallen as late as the month of March. The extreme heat and drought of the dry season are effectual bars to the cultivation of wheat and barley; but maize and rice (although I saw none of the latter) flourish on the banks of the river. Beans, chilis (a coarse kind of pea), pumpions, with a few sweet and water melons, form I believe the whole list of cultivated vegetables, with the exception of the rare cabbages and turnips

which I saw in the private gardens. No fruits are reared for sale; but the woods are said to abound in several delicious varieties, which at this season were not ripe. The little comforts of life are here very expensive. Wheaten cakes, equalling our halfpenny rolls, are a medio (three pence) each; onions of the bigness of a finger one penny; and the only cheap article is the Tasajo or strips of dried beef, of which three or four yards sell for a medio.

While I was transcribing these few notes under the frying and not over-fragrant awning of the canoe, the sky darkened; the air became damp and sultry as a vapour bath; myriads of mosquitos flew under our covering: and as we were led to expect a heavy storm, we tied our canoe to the bough of a mangrove-tree, and awaited its coming. I had never before been actually exposed to a regular Mexican shower; and this soon most effectually cooled my curiosity, as it far exceeded every thing I could have expected. Tremendous thunder and very vivid lightning burst from the dense black clouds; a heavy squall swept across

the forest, as though it would level the largest trees ; and tearing off quantities of branches in its progress, half covered us with the ruin it had caused. The rain now came down in torrents ; the canoe was nearly filled, and every thing was set afloat ; while as we sat shivering up to our knees in the water, the swarms of mosquitos, ungrateful for the shelter which the awning afforded them, stung us almost to madness.

When enabled to advance again, I continued taking soundings and bearings of the river till we came to a low sandy shoal crossing the whole stream, and having but four feet of water on its deepest part. These low soundings, which continued about half a mile, then deepened to three fathoms. This bar is five miles above Panuco, and is an effectual impediment to the further advance of vessels of burthen. Being a hard sand, it is more than probable that it never very materially alters its position ; and in the rainy season, if any vessel had the hardihood to attempt the passage, there would be found an increased depth of twenty or

thirty feet : but it would be a hazardous and fool-hardy attempt, and its accomplishment could have no beneficial results. Panuco, therefore, may be considered as the highest navigable point for any vessel but canoes.

April 20.—To my great joy the sun burst through the gloomy black clouds which had again threatened us ; and as the thin gray vapours of the morning vanished beneath its rays, we had the promise of a fine, that is to say, a scorching day. Walking on the flowery bank by the river side, under the shade of the overhanging trees, the canoe sailed abreast of us before a light breeze ; and we shot some Cojolites,—dark-coloured birds, of the gallinaceous tribe, nearly equalling a hen turkey in size, and very delicate eating. We purchased a large kettle of milk at an Indian hut, and then pushed on for the pretty Rancho of Miradores, situated near a ferry called the “ Paso Real,” at which mules are swam over on the route from San Luis to Panuco. Near the Rancho hut were a number of high poles driven firmly into the ground

and supporting several long spars, over which some thousand yards of Tasajo were hung in long coils, to dry in the sun. We procured some yards of the beef to cook with our birds; and in the mean time an Indian woman washed our clothes in the river, and dried them on the sandy beach. In the hut I saw the hides of three light red deer, which had been killed amongst the domestic cattle, with whom they frequently associate. The number and variety of butterflies seen on this day was quite astonishing; we frequently observed several square yards entirely covered with them. They always appeared to assemble in communities of the same colour; and none which differed in tints and size ever associated together, or varied the uniformity of the bright patches, which resembled little beds of flowers.

Soon after leaving the Paso, we observed a large black mass near the top of a high bank, which the canoe-men said was a "snake with four nostrils," (*culebra de quatro narices*). I twice fired at, and fancied I had hit it, for it seemed to shake as if in

pain; but it crawled into a hole before I could climb up to it, and I observed that the body was about eight feet in length and as bulky as a large orange. At noon the temperature was 84° in the shade. Gliding slowly through the stream we shot a *Cojolite*, and for the third or fourth time I killed two vultures for specimens; but, as on all former occasions, I gave up the attempt of preserving them, for it is quite impossible to convey any idea how very offensive they are. In the woods I found a tree bearing the remains of a quantity of *Anona*, on which the parrots, screaming around in all directions, had been for some time feasting.

Since leaving Panuco, the banks of the river had much changed in appearance, being now very steep and in many places destitute of wood. Fan Palms frequently usurped the place of other trees, and whole groves of them were at times to be seen without a trunk of any other kind amongst them. In the evening we shot some of the "*Patos Reales*" (royal ducks), which equal the Muscovy breed in size. They are of a glossy black, and the male has

a large white patch on the wing coverts. These birds are remarkable for perching on lofty trees, on the large branches of which they prefer roosting, to settling on the ground. Heavy clouds collected at sunset, and in the night we were drenched with their contents, and also much tormented by the mosquitos.

April 21.—The morning was fine, and we landed as the day broke to cook our breakfast and dry our clothes. Here we procured one of the beautiful birds called Calandria, whose plumage is composed of the most richly brilliant yellow and a deep black. It builds, or rather weaves its purse-like nest from the extreme of a slender branch, where it swings about with every wind that blows. We obtained one of these curious bags, and found in its bottom part another nest, in which were two white eggs about the size of those of the chaffinch, and irregularly marked with spots of deep brown.

I had observed on these two last days that the river owing to the heavy rains had increased considerably, and its current had acquired in the cen-

tre the velocity of about three miles an hour. Shoals now became more frequent, and the water was so turbid that it could not be drunk until it had stood some minutes to allow the mud to subside. At sunset we arrived at the bottom of a little ravine, above which, at about half a mile from the river, stands the small Indian village of Tanjucó. A large bevy of Indian girls were standing half naked and splashing each other in the river as we approached the shore, but soon after ran off in a hurry, laughing and talking very rapidly in the Guasteca language, which I now heard for the first time. One of the canoe-men with great difficulty procured for us admission into a hut; and we were most thankful for such shelter, although one half the room was occupied by the gear and pack-saddles of mules, and by the riding furniture of about a dozen Rancheros. Their saddles were all mounted across two long beams, with the large wooden stirrups hanging a sufficient depth below them to knock our heads whenever we moved. Four hens with broods of chickens, and three others which

were sitting on their eggs, occupied various snug corners. Some half-dried beef in long odoriferous festoons dangled on one side, while on another were suspended, to dry, three raw deer-skins, and the hide of a Puma or American lion. The place swarmed with mosquitos, and I went supperless to bed under my gauze curtain. My two men, who had no such luxury, were soon driven out to the open air, where they covered themselves in their blankets, and lay in company with our landlord (who was the Indian Alcalde), his wife, children, dogs and pigs, on the dusty ground.

Soon after my candle was put out, an Indian and his wife came to sleep in my room, which I now discovered was a kind of general head-quarters for travellers; and all the dogs of the establishment entering also, carried off several good things which I had hoped to have cooked for the morrow's breakfast.

April 22.—I had found the river so much swollen and so very rapid on account of the recent rains,

that our large canoe could make but little way against it; and it was evident that a whole fortnight would have been required to reach San Juan, the limit to which I wished to extend my examination: I therefore determined to ride there, and descend the stream in a small canoe. Soon after noon I set out on mules with Manuel one of the boatmen, and an Indian to bring back the cattle, leaving my people to the care of the Alcalde until my return.

On quitting Tanjucó, we entered the thicket, where two red deer crossed our path. As far as the turnings of our route through the closely-woven wilderness would admit of my judging, we made about a south course, and at five came to a small cluster of deserted huts called "Tantajou," near which were several trees bearing a most delicately fragrant flower named "Flor de Rosal." In form it resembles a large white lily, but grows in clusters of a dozen or more on the same stalk. In half an hour, having come south fifteen miles, we reached a pass of the river called "Paso de Tantajo;" and I

here witnessed a most unpleasant mode of ferrying. We embarked in a very small canoe, about two feet and a half in width, with our saddles and my little luggage, having with the "canoéro" four men. Holding the halters of our four animals, we pulled them by main force into the stream,—an operation which very nearly upset the frail hollow trunk in which we sat: but the mules soon recovered from their first alarm; and although the stream was very rapid, they struck out boldly, and towed us in a short time to the opposite bank. Paying two reals for the passage of ourselves and animals, we rode forward through an extensive Rancho, in which for three or four miles no other trees than Fan Palms were to be seen. They were thickly scattered over a large plain, where the coarse rank grass was so high that the backs of the cattle which fed amongst it were scarcely discernible.

Having ridden south-west six or seven miles, we arrived after dark at six or eight poor huts called "Tanquichi," where for some time we could not

find a living soul, or even a dog to bark at us. At length we stumbled over a naked Indian lying on his back on the ground, and fanning the clouds of mosquitos from him with a cloth,—the thick smoke of a little wood fire which was placed to windward being insufficient to keep off these tormentors.

I may here notice a singular custom which I observed amongst the Indians and Rancheros in this little excursion; which was, that where the mosquitos were most abundant and tormenting, they invariably lay down stripped of their shirt; and our canoe-men made a constant practice of this, fanning themselves,—and I verily believe in their sleep,—all night. Our naked friend muttered a drowsy assent to the mules being tied to a corner of his hut, and to our lying down wherever we could, or following his cool example. But the women who were withinside resisted all our intreaties that they would give us something to eat; and no promise of money could induce them even to make us a Tortilla.

April 23.—Having been half-devoured by the

mosquitos, by four A.M. on the 23rd we once more pursued our route through the woods. Many of the trees were of an immense size; and the Banyans in particular were quite enormous, with their several gigantic trunks supporting the monstrous branches from which they had originally descended as slender suckers. I here met with a variety of the Fan Palm seventy or eighty feet in height, but exceedingly thin in the stem, answering in appearance to the Betel-tree of the East. It is called Palma Real, and is in much request for beams and supports in houses. The people pointed out to me several wild fruits, none of which were ripe; and the ground in many places was strewed with that of the Ojite, the kernel of which the Indians boil as a substitute for maize in times of scarcity. It is a round reddish pulpy fruit, of the size of a large gooseberry, but quite smooth. In taste it is rather sweet and insipid; and it contains one seed or kernel, resembling an acorn in consistency, quite round, and no larger than a black-heart cherry. The tree which produces this fruit is very

large, and apparently an evergreen; its leaves not unlike those of the Laurestinus, and they constitute the fodder of horses and domestic cattle both at Tampico and Panuco, where grass cannot easily be procured.

We met several Indians with baskets of Ojite-berries, who were going with their families to San Vicente to hear mass and keep holiday. I observed in many places in the woods little rural crosses constructed of the branches of trees, and placed at the entrances or turnings of the little pathways. Here and there a large crucifix would be seen in some conspicuous place; and all were crowned with garlands of wild flowers by the passing Indians, who had on this day renewed several of these beautifully simple ornaments, although many bore chaplets of woven palm-leaves which had long since faded.

We arrived before seven at the village of San Vicente, at which all the neighbouring population were assembled for church, and to be idle and happy. I went to the hut of the Alcalde, the rally-

ing point of all the Rancheros, whose horses were tied to the posts which supported the roof. As the house was full of gossiping acquaintance, I met with no encouragement to enter it; and therefore sat down with as much patience as I could command, Manuel having resolved to hear mass. By way of diverting the intermediate time, I performed my toilette in public; shaving and washing myself, to the great edification of a numerous wondering assemblage of people who surrounded me, and who very rarely themselves performed these operations. In due time I obtained some Tortillas and Tasajo, and then went to see the church, the exterior of which I had previously taken a sketch of. It was a long mud barn, not even white-washed; a poverty of appearance which could in no way take from its sanctity as a place of worship: but it was filled with at least a hundred of the most horrid figures I ever saw, painted in gaudy colours, and varying in size from very small dolls to that of a half-grown person. One figure of our Saviour with a large brown wig was seated on a child's

toy horse, exactly of the kind which our English children play with, having straight legs, and the head and curved neck cut out of a flat board. This was by no means the worst figure to be seen :—but I will not dwell on the disgusting appearance of the monsters which met my eye ; such, in fact, that had a strange people visited this church, they would not have hesitated to consider the worshippers as idolaters. I can only say, that hitherto I have neither seen an original or a picture of the Mexican deities at the time of the Conquest, more abhorrent or absurd than the idols in the Romish church of San Vicente.

The Rancheros, who could not imagine what business had brought me so far out of the usual route, were very urgent that I should exhibit the goods and other articles I had brought for sale ; and made offers for my gun, jacket, and in fact every thing belonging to me. On finding that I had no marketable goods, they would scarcely believe that a wish merely to see the Rio San Juan could have brought me so far.

The curiosity and suspicions of the Alcalde were so greatly excited, that he demanded my passport, observing, that "no man would ride up the banks of a river merely to descend it again by a canoe, unless he had some other object in view." I therefore showed him a Custom-house paper, which, as he was no scholar, was quite sufficient passport for me.

To escape further question I rambled over to a party of Indians, who under a large tree in the middle of the village were holding a kind of Sunday's fair. Their goods (which were spread on the grass) consisted of variously dyed locks of wool, wrappers, belts, and bad European trinkets; and there were several parties who sold small cakes, plantains, cheeses, sugar, and other wares.

The whole of these people and the crowd which surrounded them were loitering away the day, and looking forward to a night fandango. After waiting until near noon, it was announced that the Francisca who was to perform mass was sick, and that no service was to take place. The care

of this reverend man consists of about one hundred souls in San Vicente and the surrounding Ranchos; but the Pueblo or village itself does not contain above thirty or forty scattered huts. Riding seven miles we arrived at the Rancho of San Juan.

The Alcalde of San Vicente, who, I discovered, had been cross-questioning Manuel, and had come to the conclusion that I was a very important personage, overtook us on the road, and gave me his company to the Rancho. He obligingly pointed out to me several varieties of trees which I wished to see; and as our whole road lay through his property, he did this with the greater pleasure, showing me how rich he was in cedars, helping to cut a stick from the "Ule" or Indian-rubber tree, and making me acquainted with several good woods for dyeing. Some of the timber was of an immense size; but many large trunks near the road side stood dead and leafless, from having been stripped of their bark by the Indians for the purpose of tanning leather. I found the little

Rancho of San Juan a beautiful and retired spot : about two dozen huts lay scattered amongst the fine trees, and groups of cattle were straying in the long grass or sleeping in the shade of the thicket. Every thing bespoke quiet and comfort ; and the simple-mannered natives appeared happy and contented in their removal from the more busy world. I obtained an entire room to myself, with a large massive table placed in a kind of holy nook, which is to be found in almost every hut in the country. In this corner may usually be seen some dozen rough and extraordinary prints, or attempts at paintings, of scriptural, or more properly monkish subjects, pasted thickly on the wall ; from this is sometimes seen projecting a painted bracket for the candle, which on feast-days is burnt before the favourite saint. Crucifixes innumerable, palm branches, dust and cobwebs, generally make up the array, with not unfrequently those clusters of wasps' nests* which are so common in even the better class of dwellings.

* They vary in size from of that a walnut to half a small apple,

The mistress of my room (who lived in a hut opposite) soon discovered that I was hungry, and sent me some palmito root very nicely prepared for my dinner.—This is the tender heart of the young fan palm before it has acquired any stem, and is about the size and thickness of a man's leg. It is very excellent when cooked, and even while raw has an agreeable flavour somewhat sweeter than that of a white cabbage, which it much resembles in crispness and consistency.

I found in the hut the skins of two leopards which had been killed in the Rancho. I also fished out an imperfect piece of sculpture, bearing some resemblance to the lion-figure-head of a ship, and heard of several more at an ancient city some few leagues distant called "Quaï-a-lam."

I had never until this day seen that troublesome insect a "Nigua," or Jigger, and then saw

and are built entirely of clay, in the manner of the swallow's nest. Each, according to its size, contains a number of little cells for the larvæ of the wasp, which are plastered up until they have strength enough to burst their passage out.

quite enough of them in the toes and feet of a poor little pot-bellied Indian orphan belonging to the house, and comptroller of the hens and chickens. He was sitting with one leg under him like a China Joss, and the other stretched forward into the lap of a girl, who with a blunt needle was extracting the nests of these insects, which are inclosed in tough white bags sometimes equalling a rape-seed in size. During this operation the boy never winced, so that from his apparent apathy I concluded him to be an idiot; but the poor thing was weakly and ill, and every part of him but his prodigious belly had been wasted away by the fever which carried off his parents. He appeared to take a great fancy to me,—I verily believe from my having made so many compassionate faces for him when I saw the girl tearing his toes; so I gave him a medio, which was the first money he had ever possessed, and he in gratitude sat and stared at me all the evening. I was much amused by the way in which I obtained information as to the age of this “Cristiano,” who himself knew

nothing of the matter: but a woman hearing the inquiry, told him in the language of a farrier to show his teeth,—and pronounced him to be six years old.

I believe that every woman and the greater part of the men of the Rancho came at different times in the evening to see my watch and writing-case, neither of which curiosities had ever before been exhibited in San Juan. The watch was a machine of which all had heard; but their astonishment on hearing it tick and seeing its wheels in motion, was really as great as I ever saw displayed by either Negroes or Esquimaux; yet these people were almost all white, and the descendants of Spaniards.

A venerable old Ranchero whose opinions seemed to carry great weight, remarked, that “it was a folly (*touteria*) to give a number of dollars for a thing just to know how many hours it was from morning or night;—that to know when to eat and drink, when to get up or lie down to rest, was quite sufficient:” a remark which with

these primitive people met with very general approval. Offers were made to purchase every thing belonging to me ;—a mano of paper, buttons, any article whatsoever; my visitors being persuaded that I could come for no other purpose than to trade.

The poor people at San Juan have no means of procuring foreign clothing, arms, or utensils, but by sending down the river to Tampico; and they are in consequence obliged to pay so exorbitantly, that the presents I made them of paper, a pencil, and other trifles, gave them a high opinion of my generosity.

It is remarkable that there are no mosquitos at this place, although above and below it, and in fact in almost the whole vicinity of the river, they are exceedingly numerous and tormenting. I know not to what cause their absence may be attributed, as the temperature, the relative situation and the soil, are precisely the same as at those places most infested.

April 24.—On waking in the morning I found

my landlady's daughter standing by my side with sweet bread, and coffee boiled with milk and the pure expressed juice of the sugar-cane,—a preparation I have never seen excelled as a breakfast. I then joined a party of Rancheros who had assembled to kill a cow and cut her flesh into *tasajo*,—an operation which they performed with extraordinary skill and dispatch, separating the sinews from the flesh with anatomical precision. Two men devoted themselves to cutting the meat into long strings or ropes, which they threw to another who rubbed them well with salt: after this, no other process remained but to hang the beef in festoons over long poles to dry in the sun.

I breakfasted with the Rancheros, when their work was done, on dry meat with Chili sauce and piping hot tortillas served up in rapid succession. Our second course was a dish of cow's blood stewed with sweet herbs: and having prefaced our meal by a glass of white brandy distilled in the Rancho, we all ate heartily. When the meal was over, a little boy who had waited on us kneeled

down facing the picture corner of the room, and recited a prayer and thanks to the Virgin *. My companions devoutly crossed themselves, and then proceeded to examine my curiosities. They were wild good-natured fellows, with unshaven chins and greasy leather clothes; and we formed a most merry group, I being delighted to have it in my power to amuse them.

After very great difficulty I procured a canoe; but as it had not been in the water for two years, the bottom was split and in sad condition. With petroleum and slips of wood, however, we put all to rights, and at 4 P. M. started on our return

* This simple and sincere act of devotion is very general amongst the country people, who hear the grace recited by the youngest person in company, or by a man-servant if they have one. All then cross themselves, and bowing right and left salute their neighbours with "Bon provecho!" (Much good may it do you!) I had a servant who never omitted this ceremony at my frugal meals as I travelled through the country; and although his prayer was in Latin, rapidly uttered, and neither understood by himself or his master, it was an act of unaffected piety which I respected too much to interfere with, even though he frequently invoked the protection of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and sometimes that of Señor San Francisco.

for Tanjoco, Manuel and a young Indian taking the paddles.

I left my old landlady and the pretty Rancho with regret, having met with great kindness and attention from the one, and found rest from the mosquitos in the other. I gave my hostess at parting a white neckcloth and a pair of scissars; and carried off many good wishes, with a large supply of tortillas and stewed meat and a bottle of white brandy; for all which, with the subsistence of Manuel and myself for two days, I only paid about six shillings.

It may be requisite here to explain, that much of the details of courses and situations of Ranchos and particular points is omitted in this Journal, in which my object is merely to relate my personal adventures.

Near San Juan the river is narrow, extremely turbid, and full of impetuous eddies and rapids, in which many sunken trees just show their situation by the water breaking over them. The people managed the canoe very well in this troubled na-

vigation; and at night-fall we hung the boat to a grounded tree in the middle of the stream, and slept until daylight very comfortably, the canoe exactly fitting us in width and length.

April 25.—While shooting an impetuous and turbulent rapid, we whirled past the nose of a large cayman which lay basking on the sunny bank. It was the first which had appeared for many days; and as we were swept unresistingly with the stream amongst the shoals and stumps of timber, I could not but feel how very unpleasant it would be to upset the canoe and to find oneself in the same element with the creature we had just passed.

My patience became exhausted by sitting for many hours in one posture to maintain my equilibrium, under a temperature of 109° ; but I was at last somewhat consoled by finding an alligator's nest with thirty-nine eggs. It is the custom of the caymans to select some sunny sandy beach, in which they bury their eggs, piling a large heap of sand above them. They then

leave their offspring to be hatched by the heat of the sun, although, as the Indians informed me, they keep "a register in their head," and return at the expiration of thirty days, when their newly produced little ones are ready to be taken on the mother's back and receive their first lessons in swimming. The idea that the alligator devours her young if she can catch them, is denied by the Indians, who on the contrary declare her to be very kind to them. I should like to have seen in what way the maternal solicitude of one of these horrid creatures is shown; for a nursing alligatress must be a great curiosity. The eggs are about the size of those of our domestic ducks, but bearing a highly enamelled surface. At each end they are translucent, but an opaque white band encircles the middle, which appears to have a dividing membrane across it. The yolk also resembles that of a duck's egg, but has a slight flavour of musk, and the white is nearly of the consistence of jelly. On the border of the river I shot a small eagle, of that species which, according to the Indians, preys

upon serpents. In landing for my bird, I crossed the recent track of a leopard which had been drinking in the stream, and in a few minutes killed two fine turkeys. We this day, at various times, had passed a great number of Indians, who were bathing in the river by whole families at a time, which appears to be their morning and evening custom; and all those who live near the stream are very clean both in their persons and clothes. Boats laden with articles for the Tampico market continually enlivened the scene; and it was highly amusing to observe the politeness of the passing Indians, who used the "Don" and pulled off their hats very ceremoniously to each other on every occasion, paying a variety of rapidly uttered compliments at the same time. The señoras and señoritas who sat washing themselves or their clothes in the river, received the most marked respect. Many a brown flat-visaged man, with a quarter of a pair of breeches and a straw hat, was hailed as "Don;" while inquiries were made after the health of the señora and the young ladies, who in

some instances answered for themselves as they were disporting in the water near the banks, and just showing their shining brown shoulders and immensely long jetty hair, while they swam in those places unfrequented by the alligators.

At sunset we passed the entrance of the small river Tempoál, which flows into the San Juan from the S. S. E., and whose perfectly transparent water formed a curious contrast with the muddy stream in which we were paddling. We landed for the night on a little sandy point, where myriads of mosquitos hailed our arrival with the most rapturous humming; but we kept them at bay for a time, by making a large fire to scare the lions and tigers *, of which the canoe-men had, I think, very groundless fears. We here cooked our supper and broiled some ears of maize, on which we made an excellent meal; and then resigned our persons to the hungry insects, which in their turn fared

* The puma, and a large species of leopard are so distinguished by the native Mexicans, who have no idea of the existence of more ferocious animals of these names.

most sumptuously. It may not be amiss to state here, that by determining never to rub a mosquito bite,—inflammation, swelling, and a great stock of extra pain may be avoided. The people, in consequence of having scratched themselves, returned covered with sores, while I on the contrary, having refrained from this indulgence, retained scarcely a mark *.

April 26.—We pursued our journey at day-break, and I soon forgot my sufferings in the pleasure of shooting four turkey-cocks. I saw also a great number of rabbits, cojolites, doves and other birds, as we glided down the river; but I was too rich in turkeys to pay any attention to them, and was anxious to reach Tanjuco before night.

* All my experience of these tormentors proved to me that they have not degenerated since the time of the Conquest; when Bernal Diaz most pathetically describes them, and almost ranks them with the Indians, saying that in addition to the natives, “habia muchos murcielagos, é chinches y mosquitos, é todo les daba guerra” (there were also many bats and bugs and mosquitos, all of which made war upon the soldiers).

At noon we passed some high cliffs, which being of a reddish earth are called *Tierra Colorada*. They are but scantily wooded, and are said to be the favourite resort of pumas, leopards, jackals, and the jabali or Mexican hog.

At twelve miles above Tanjuco and fifty-nine above Panuco we passed the junction of the river Tamoin* with the San Juan, where their combined streams receive the same name, and flow to the sea as the Rio Panuco. After stopping for a few minutes at the Rancho of Bichinchijol to procure some sour curds and sugar from a sweetheart of Manuel's, we made the best of our way to Tanjuco which we reached at 4 P. M.

In this little excursion I had fully verified the assertions of my boatmen as to the difficulty of ascending the river in our large canoe, the rapids being so strong that even our small one had passed some of them with considerable risk. After the recent rains the current had become very im-

* Here about sixty yards in width, the united stream is about one hundred and fifty.

petuous, and the quantity of sunken trees which lie in the narrow parts of the river renders the navigation difficult and dangerous.

As far as my hasty visit would permit me to judge, the only point to which laden boats of any size could ascend with safety is Tanquichi, about thirty miles below San Juan; whence, should any commerce turn that way, mules could always be procured to any other part of the country, the paths through the forests and thickets being said to be very good.

From San Juan to Tanjuco, by the most accurate compass bearings and estimated distances, is seventy-eight miles, in which distance the river takes no less than one hundred and six very abrupt turnings. The general width of the Panuco is from half a mile to one hundred yards; that of the San Juan is in many places much narrower. At forty-six miles above Tanjuco and ninety-three from Panuco, the Rio Tempoál joins the San Juan.

I found that my two Englishmen had been very

kindly treated by the Indians, with whom they had made themselves on excellent terms, although neither party understood one word that the other said. Owing to the arrival of a kind of pedlar with dresses and various articles for sale, there had been great doings and fandangos in the village every night, the strangers always being invited to join the dancers under a large shed, which acted as a cow- and sheep-house by day, and was transformed into a ball-room at night. The old Alcalde made a point of being very drunk and important on all these occasions, and no dancing took place until he thought proper to fire his musket, which was the anxiously awaited signal for the merriment to commence.

Tanjuco does not contain above twenty very miserable huts, well stocked with naked children and pigs; and as it has not a single white inhabitant, and very few speak or understand a word of Spanish, it may be considered as a good specimen of what the Indian towns were at the time of the Conquest. The huts are still built of stakes and

bamboos, and thatched with palm leaves. No traces of Christianity are to be seen, the nearest church being nine leagues distant, at Panuco; and the perfect mildness and simplicity of the natives not a little favours the resemblance to the settlements of which the early writers have given us a description.

April 27.—We left the village early in the morning, having laid in a large store of water-melons; a luxury of which the value can only be estimated under a temperature of 90° in the shade, or rather under the reflected heat of our hide-awning.

Passing a steep cliff, fifteen miles from any village, we observed a quantity of earthenware to be mingled with its clay; and one of the canoe-men discovered a small crockery-ware leg protruding itself. After securing this, at a few yards further we picked out the body of a curious little female figure, also in terra cotta.

Having now no further bearings to take, we slept and drove with the current; and soon after

noon on the 28th arrived at Panuco, where two American schooners and a Campeachy brig were lying at anchor; the latter discharging a cargo of salt, for which there is great demand by the people who prepare Tasajo. Waiting until the cool of the evening, we again dropped down the river.

April 29.—At breakfast-time on the following morning we landed at Tamanti to purchase some milk and half a stone goddess, of which I had heard at Panuco, and which was a heavy load for the four men who carried her to the canoe. She now has the honour of associating with some Egyptian idols in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. We landed a second time for a supply of the clustering limes which hung invitingly over the stream; and then paddling all night, cheered by the prospect of a bed and fewer mosquitos, we arrived early on the morning of the 30th at Las Tamaulipas, where the gentleman whose return from Real del Monte I had been directed to await, had arrived two days before me. On returning to my old quarters, I found that I had sustained a sad

loss in upwards of one hundred carefully prepared specimens of birds, which my servant and I had at various leisure moments procured with great exposure to the burning climate. The small black larvæ of some prolific moth had got amongst them in prodigious numbers, and even the scaly skin of the alligator had not escaped their destructive ravages.

Unfortunately for my repose after my expedition, I found that the Commandant with a large party of his officers had engaged themselves to dine on board the Company's brig. Fatigue and a head-ache pleaded my excuse for not joining them; but in the evening they became so very drunk and clamorous for me, that I was obliged to comply, and was almost immediately forced to accompany them in their boat to the other town. My companions now began splashing each other; next they proceeded to bale hats-full of water in all directions; and finally, when we reached the spot where the caymans most abound, they amused themselves by throwing somersets into the river,

an operation which nearly drowned a poor old captain lineally descended from one of the Conquistadores. I now thought proper to interfere, and made the crew land at a place half a league from the town; a distance I shall well remember, as it fell to my lot to carry old Garibai to his house, an effort from which I did not recover for many days.

May 1.—His Majesty's ship Tweed having anchored off the Bar, I went on board, and paid a longer visit to Captain Hunn than I had anticipated; for a summer norther set in with a very heavy sea, and I was unable to land until the 3rd, when the Tweed sailed again.

May 4.—I accompanied a large party to Tampico on the afternoon of the 4th, in order to be present at the ceremonies of the Feast of Ascension. For some previous days the natives from every part of the surrounding country had been flocking in to assist at this annual and most important festival. The towns of Pueblo Viejo and

Las Tamaulipas were almost forsaken, and we found the little village of Tampico crowded with many thousand people in their gala dresses. The Plaza was filled by booths containing clothing, trinkets, toys, cakes and other articles, just in the manner of our country fairs, but there were also several gaming-tables under canopies. The Commandant with two companies of his troops in their best uniforms were also there, and the whole scene was really very lively and interesting.

At three o'clock the two bells of the Parroquia tolled rapidly; and the crowd gathering round the church, we entered with them to where the old priest stood by the tawdry crucifix of which I have already spoken, in order that he might touch the leg of the image with ribbons and crosses which were brought to be thus sanctified as reliquias in return for an offering proportioned to the zeal of the giver. Some therefore subscribed very largely; and a heavy dollar thrown from the hand of a poor Indian, who perhaps did not possess an-

other in the world, would frequently jingle amongst the lighter contributions of less pious Christians. Many obtained "Indulgencias" by kissing the newly painted thigh of the statue; and it was not until the subscription ceased, that the figure was lifted and carried from the church on the shoulders of voluntary bearers habited in white robes.

At this awful moment a ship is annually seen by the eyes of the Faithful, far away in the offing, bringing, to bless the solemnities, that Christ whose miraculous image is moving in procession! Hundreds now leapt upon the walls near the church, with open mouths and straining eyes, to look out upon the distant horizon; but none of those whom I questioned would venture to affirm that they actually saw the ship. The image was paraded round the whole town, preceded by two men, who gratuitously read aloud before it. The head of one of these people was too remarkable not to be noticed, and I observed that he chaunted with much greater vigour than his companion, and apparently in a different form of words.



Further in advance marched a most singularly assorted band of musicians. There was a harper, with fifiers, abundant Indian rattles, a woman and several men playing on fiddles, each performing his own tune. When all was over, the people dispersed to dance and gamble; and we rode back again to the old town. Hundreds of weary women were on the same road, carrying bundles containing their holiday finery; and many who had worn white satin shoes, silk stockings, and gowns of the finest French materials, with very rich veils at the Fiesta, were now returning home bare-footed and merely in a shirt and petticoat. I could not but remark throughout the day the very striking difference between this and our English festivals,

where all is bustle, noise and activity, though mingled, it must be confessed, with a few broken heads and black eyes. Here, an air of quiet lazy happiness seemed to pervade all classes. The men and women sauntered slowly through the village, where many lay sleeping on mats in the shade, while others were dispersed in listless smoking groups under the little awnings of the booths.

On the 7th a vessel arrived with people for the mines of Catorce, and I received by her several letters which much affected my future plans in Mexico. A young gentleman who came in this vessel was in a dangerous stage of yellow fever, which he had contracted by sleeping only one night on shore at Vera Cruz. He died on the 10th. The Spanish surgeon who was called in, shrugged his shoulders, and plainly told the patient, even at the first visit, that his case was hopeless; nor would he prescribe any medicines for him, considering them of no use. Mr. Price, a medical gentleman attached to the same Company with myself, also visited the unfortunate invalid, though it was then

too late, and attributed his death in a great measure to the want of proper and timely assistance.

May 12.—The brig of the Real del Monte Company crossed the Bar; but by the ignorance and stubbornness of the pilot she tailed on the northern shoal, and carried away some of her false keel. At this time the depth over the bar was thirteen feet. I was fortunate enough on this day, in crossing to Pueblo Viejo, to see a Manati, or Sea-cow*, which, having been left by the tide in shoal water, had been killed and drawn on shore. Its body to the commencement of the tail was eight feet and a half in length, and the tail itself, shaped like a broad paddle, two feet and a half more; the latter was quite flat, placed horizontally as in all the cetaceous animals, and three feet across. The carcase was about equal to that of an ordinary sea-horse or walrus, and might weigh about ten hundred weight; and in form, particularly about the head, it was very similar to that animal. The fins or arms, of which it had only two, were shaped

* Called also Lamantin: *Manatus Americanus*, Cuv.

much like those of the whale. There were but few hairs on the skin, which when deprived of the cuticle greatly resembled in exterior appearance prepared hog's hide. While wet and recent it was about an inch in thickness, and I brought away some thongs, of which I made strong whips.

The flesh, in colour, was like that of a raw turkey; the fat not rancid, but on the contrary very sweet; and a steak which I cooked tasted so like well-fed young pork, that the difference could scarcely have been detected.

In the afternoon our brig sailed for England; and I now after a series of most provoking detentions prepared to start for the interior.

May 14.—All my accounts were now settled; and as I was prepared to leave Tamaulipas on the morrow, I threw together a few notes respecting this part of the country, which I had omitted to insert in the course of my diary.

The maps and general opinion would lead strangers to imagine that there was but one Tampico, when in fact there are three towns on the Rio Panuco which bear that name, either singly or com-

bined with some other appellation. The first and most ancient, as its name implies, is Pueblo Viejo de Tampico, situated on the border of the large shallow lake which lies to the southward of the river. This was originally a cluster of the huts of fishermen, who supported themselves by catching, in the months of May and June, vast quantities of a large species of shrimp, which being dried became a considerable article of exportation. These shell-fish are still as abundantly caught as ever, but for very many years the town has been important in a mercantile point of view. It is recorded that Admiral Drake once visited this place, and carried off all the wealth of the inhabitants*, which induced them to found the village now distinguished by the name of Tampico, and situated on a rising ground amidst the thickets about seven miles to the southward. This latter place never arrived

* The memory of this visit has been preserved in a singular way, although I have but little confidence in the authenticity of the story. The English sailors are said to have introduced to the natives whom they plundered, the method of making grog, which name having I suppose been too difficult to remember, has been supplanted by that of *Drak*, in memory of our English admiral.

at any degree of importance, and Pueblo Viejo has again become the chief town. It has at present a population of about 4000 souls, the greater part of whom owe their subsistence to foreign trade. The houses are of a very inferior description, but the shops are many of them well stocked with European commodities. One of these depôts bears the name of "The Deity," and others are no less blasphemously distinguished. There is a large windowless mud church here, which I rarely saw opened. The two inns are miserable, dirty and comfortless; but from subsequent experience I can declare that they are, with the exception of one recently opened at Vera Cruz, the very best in the whole Republic of Mexico.

The market is tolerably well provided with meat, fruit and vegetables, the latter of which are brought from a considerable distance up the river in canoes. Its supply of fish is but little attended to, although the Rio Panuco abounds in them. Turtle, which are large and numerous, are not esteemed; and the periodical fishery for shrimps is, as I have said, the

only thing now attended to. These are taken by means of weirs and large hoop nets, and during their season the little passages leading from the river to the lake of Tampico are almost stopped up by the shrimpers. Game is abundantly supplied to the market, and consists of ducks, wild turkeys, the large crested pheasant, chachalacas, cojolites, and other kinds; but venison is not often procured.

The vicinity of the shallow lake is considered as the principal cause of the agues and fevers which are so prevalent at this place, the water being at certain seasons so low as to leave extensive muddy shoals and oyster banks exposed to the burning rays of the sun. On landing at Pueblo Viejo a stranger becomes immediately impressed with the idea of being in an unhealthy place, by seeing the house-tops covered with flocks of the black disgusting-looking carrion vultures, or by finding them battenning on their offensive food in his immediate path, from whence they are not easily dislodged.

The immediate borders of the lake, and the site of Pueblo Viejo are remarkable as being formed

of a stratum of decomposing oyster-shells, which is of considerable depth, although the impossibility of digging below the level of the waters of the lake in sinking wells, precluded my seeing an extent of more than twelve feet.

The next town in point of importance, and which will soon eclipse the other two, is the Pueblo Nuevo de las Tamaulipas, situated about three miles to the northward of the old town, and on the bank of the river. This, as I have already said, is of very recent erection, and increasing rapidly, being built on a neat model, and inviting by its commercial advantages the removal of the natives from Altamira and other parts. There can be little doubt of this having been the situation of the populous town which was discovered by Juan de Grijalva in 1518, when the warlike natives attacked his ships with so much courage, and were beaten off with considerable difficulty*. The historians of

* In consequence of the assailants coming to battle in sixteen large canoes, the river at that period obtained the name of "Rio de Canoas."

the Conquest of Mexico all agree in saying that the wars in the country near the Panuco were carried on by Cortez' soldiers with the greatest fury; and it is not improbable that the town at Tamaulipas was the first destroyed by the invaders. Remains of utensils, statues, weapons, and even skeletons, have frequently been discovered in digging the foundations of the recently erected buildings; and some singularly shaped figures in terra cotta, which I now have in my possession, bear the closest resemblance to others I have met with in more distant provinces.

In the Pueblo Viejo and Pueblo Nuevo the want of potable water is very severely felt; and the inhabitants receive their chief supply from the Tamesi, a small stream which branches from the lake of Altamira, and is about three leagues up the river Panuco. Large canoes are constantly employed on this business, and it is customary for families to send relays of small casks according to their wants.

Another great inconvenience is the extreme

scarcity and dearness of fodder for horses, which are fed on the leaves and young branches of a tree named Ojite, growing in considerable abundance at some distance in the woods. Notwithstanding the vicinity of immense herds of cattle, milk is rarely to be procured at Tampico : fresh butter is never seen, in consequence of the heat of the climate ; and the only cheese brought to market is an inferior kind of preparation of curds.

The Tampico towns have very materially risen in importance since the establishment of Mexican independence ; and a brisk trade is constantly carried on with the United States, whose small vessels have great facilities in passing over a bar, which offers a sad impediment to our more weighty merchantmen.

CHAPTER II.

Journey from Las Tamaulipas to San Luis Potosi—Santa Barbara—Tortillas — Holy Picture of the Virgin — Ancient Building—Tula—Funeral of a Child—Peotillas—San Luis Potosi—Route from San Luis to Zacatecas—Vino Mescal—Salt Marshes—Arrival at Veta Grande of Zacatecas.

AT seven on the morning of the 15th of May I left Las Tamaulipas for San Luis Potosi, my party consisting of my servant and another Englishman, a native attendant named Flores, with four Arrieros or muleteers, and fifteen mules.

We set out on the road to Altamira, already described as being through a closely interwoven forest, and at one we reached the little town. The muleteers deposited their cargoes on an open space near the Campo Santo, while we placed our saddles and persons in a roofless hut about half a mile from the town, in one corner of which a sick Indian, attended by his wife, was moaning with fever

and ague, while muleteers, dogs and vermin surrounded us. These were inconveniences to which every traveller in Mexico must endeavour to reconcile himself; since, with the exception of the high road from Vera Cruz to the capital, he has, particularly in the northern states, to traverse a country which may literally be called one continued wilderness.

May 16.—Leaving Altamira at an early hour, the road was very good, with broad beaten paths amongst a few scattered thickets. We had not ridden far when I found two wild hogs (Jabali) lying by the road side with their heads cleft in two, as if by the strokes of a hatchet. None of their flesh had been taken away *, although they were

* It may perhaps be superfluous to remind the reader, that these animals are mentioned in old books of travels and natural history, and still by the natives of the country, as having their navel on the back. There is a gland on this part whence issues a secretion, which gives, if the part be not cut out immediately after death, a most unpleasant flavour to the flesh; and it is this peculiarity which has given rise to the idea of the Peccari, or Mexican Hog, having its navel on the back.

fat and in good condition; but a large flock of vultures were enjoying a most savoury repast upon it.

After a ride of three leagues we arrived at a solitary hut, "La Potranca," where we obtained some curds and whey; in asking for which I made an odd mistake, by inquiring of a very old woman if she had any "Suégro" (father-in-law), instead of "Suéro" (whey). Leaving this place, Flores pointed out to me in a small thicket, the grave of a young Frenchman, who about six months before had shot himself while in a state of delirium caused by fever.

The country now became rather uneven; the scenery was more interesting, and enlivened by a great number of light-coloured hares, which were running fearlessly near us.

Riding seven leagues we reached an Estero,—a long narrow pool of turbid water,—of which the animals drank eagerly, the thermometer being 110° in the sun. In three leagues more we arrived at a lone hut in the middle of a plain, dignified by

the name of Guarita*. I decided on resting here for the night, as my mules were far behind, and the baggage had to pass an examination by a custom-house officer and two soldiers. At this place as well as at almost every other rest we made, we all slept in the open air, which, whatever may be reported of its insalubrity, is at this season far more refreshing and agreeable than lying under cover. Deer are so very plentiful on this plain as to be frequently seen in large herds, going to drink at sunset from a pool of water near the hut; the inmates of which said it was too much trouble to shoot them, although by their own confession they rarely enjoyed the luxury of meat with their Tortillas.

May 17.—Soon after seven we set out, and in the cool of the morning saw several wild turkeys, hares, and two varieties of quails. I killed with my whip one of the beautiful coral snakes reputed to be so venomous. This reptile was alternately bar-

* Custom-house station.

red with deep red, and black bands of nearly equal width, the latter being edged with narrow yellow borders. It was about three feet in length, and the poison fangs, which I extracted, were very large. We soon afterwards started a very long snake, called "Alicante," which is said to be perfectly innoxious; but after a chase of half an hour it escaped us.

In the forenoon the Bernal of Orcasitas (or Horcasistas) suddenly appeared before us as we ascended a gentle eminence. It was still very distant, but the outline of its remarkable summit appeared distinctly above some light fleecy clouds which floated round its base.

The intermediate plains covered alternately with long yellow parched-up grass and low thickets, rendered this first view of the Bernal very striking. At two leagues from the Guarita we reached "La Primera Puerta del Chocoyo," a name applied to two hovels, as well as to the gate of a large inclosed Rancho, communicating at about fifteen miles on the right with the Hacienda del Cojo.

Two leagues further westward we reached a narrow pool of water, called "Charco Largo," and then passed "La Segunda Puerta" with two other huts; after which, in three leagues, we reached the little Rancho village of Charyssa,—a miserable assemblage of huts on a most disagreeably dusty place. The heat in the shade 93°.

Here the Arrieros persuaded me to stop after our burning dusty ride; and I unfortunately selected for a resting-place a space between two little mud cabins, in each of which were sick people,—one old and two young women, who moaned and talked in a whining half-crying tone all night; a constant custom with the Mexicans, whether seriously ill, or only slightly indisposed.

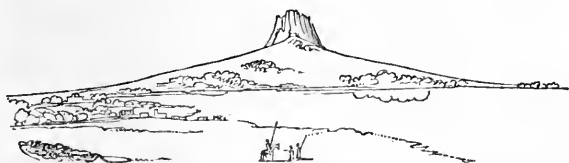
The old lady, to whom I gave a couple of pills in order to remove her head-ache, very deliberately poked one up each nostril, as being nearer the seat of pain; but a little explanation procured their extraction, and insured the transfer to her mouth.

One of my servants too had suffered so much

from the heat of the day, that in the evening a severe attack of fever came on; but a copious bleeding, which astonished the natives, and some appropriate medicine, arrested its progress. The arrival of a foreigner was soon rumoured about the huts; and in consequence many intended purchasers of paper, knives, trinkets, wine and clothing, crowded round me, and would scarcely believe that I had not a pedlar's pack to open for their inspection.

May 18.—At a mile from the Rancho we crossed a small muddy stream named “Rio de Charyssa.” It was at this season scarcely deep enough to cover its stony bed, and flowing from the northward ultimately joins the Tamoin, which enters the Rio Panuco. The morning was cool and overcast, and the majestic Bernal, whose base we had now approached, reared its rugged head above the zone of dark gray clouds which floated in dense masses around it. The only strong light it received was from an occasional ray of the rising sun, which gleamed for a time on the edges of the

clouds, and gave an air of indescribable grandeur to the scene. Our road led us to the left of the Bernal, and at about seven miles from its centre; so that I was enabled to obtain a good view of it, which may be better understood by the annexed outline sketch.



The base stretches about four miles, and rises very gradually to the centre, from whence an immense cluster of naked rocks rise to about two thousand feet above the level of the plain; while not another rock or mountain is to be found within at least thirty miles of the Bernal. The morning soon became sultry, the temperature in the shade being 94° , but it was one of the most animated I had enjoyed. Immense herds of cattle which had been driven in to be milked, were returning to their pasturage on the plains. A considerable number of

these were very large animals, and of a light dun colour, evidently of a peculiar breed, as I never saw any others like them in the country. Many hundred mules came in from their night's graze, to receive their cargoes, which lay dispersed in groups upon the plain, attended by crowds of Arrieros, who were carrying a large convoy to the interior; and a herd of half-wild mares and foals swept past us at a gallop on their way from being driven to water at the river. Flocks of sheep, goats, and asses formed the more quiet part of the picture; while several Vaqueros, or herdsmen, were careering about and lasoing such animals as had strayed.

The country since leaving Tampico had been uniformly level, and the roads, with the exception of that to Altamira, excellent. There were some few plains quite destitute of trees, and thickly covered with the rank coarse grass, which at this season was quite parched and as dry as straw; but generally the country was clothed with a close thicket of low stunted shrubs and mimosas, and no

trees of any girth of timber were to be seen. This may be accounted for by the excessive heat and drought of the Tierra Caliente during more than half the year. I remarked, however, that an inferior kind of the Tuna (a *Cactus*), which is a very juicy plant, flourished more abundantly than any other; and the dry tracts of the low lands of Mexico, as well as the arid plains of the great African desert, are remarkable for bearing a few species of the more succulent vegetables. Some few varieties of Palms, Yuccas, and dwarf Aloes, were also to be seen scattered in the dells: and the Arrieros pointed out to me a small plant somewhat resembling a young birch, and named "Palo de Leche" (milk-wood, or stick), from its property of yielding readily, if slightly struck by a whip, a very opaque white juice; believed, I know not how truly, to possess a poisonous quality. At all events, it forms an interesting subject to the muleteers, who whiled away the fatigues of our sunny ride by recounting to me a variety of horrid stories of the uses to which this milk had been applied, either to satisfy

jealousy or revenge, although all my informants confessed their inability to vouch for the truth of these recitals. After a ride of about seven leagues, we reached a small stream named San Juan, which was at this time very low, and had formed itself into many shady little pools, at which the mules drank; and I remained behind to enjoy the luxury of bathing. I would advise any traveller who might follow me over this road, on coming to San Juan, to look out for a round pool of water at about one hundred yards to the left of the crossing place, shaded by fine evergreens which dip their branches in the stream. There is a large flat stone on which he may place his clothes; and if he has the good fortune to possess a cake of soap, he may make quite another man of himself, after all his dusty scorching journeyings from Tamaulipas. Let him however remember, on being left behind, that two roads lead from the water, and that he must take that to the left; by going to the right I lost my way, and gave a great deal of trouble before I was found again. In two leagues from

hence we reached the Villa* of Horcasistas, consisting of about one hundred mud huts and houses, and having a large barn-shaped church, in front of which two bells were suspended on a scaffold. Here we obtained some dinner, and purchased also provisions for supper, as we were not to see another house until the following day. Riding six miles, we came to a small pool of water called "Arroyo de la Laja," and in four miles further, through some delightfully shaded paths, like our little English lanes, reached a small bare space amongst the thickets†, where we pitched for the night. Close on our right was a deep gully, half choked by luxuriant plants and abounding with very good water.

Our road since leaving Horcasistas had become rather uneven, over hills and dales, for the greater part covered with trees; and our general course from Altamira had hitherto been about W.N.W.

Making our beds under a clear blue sky, we all

* Here implying a town, in contradistinction to a village.

† Called from a neighbouring brook, Arroyo del Sargento.

turned in very comfortably ; but soon after midnight a rain-cloud burst over us, and a thorough soaking was but the operation of a minute. With all the misery of a forced ablution of this kind, the sufferer can scarcely refrain from laughing at himself and companions, as he stands dripping in his shirt, and watching the fruitless searches made for sheltered nooks amongst the baggage, which perhaps can only be reached by paddling through the thin mud, while it is splashed in all directions by the tropical torrents.

May 19.—Two mules were lost for some time in the woods, which enabled us to dry our clothes before they were found ; and in the mean time I enjoyed a bathe in the Arroyo (or brook), which gives the name to the place.

After riding about five miles, I remembered having left my thermometer by the water side, where it stood at 92° ; and riding back to seek for it, met two strange Arrieros, who having found a valuable sword which had dropped from beneath my housings at our outset, were endeavouring to

come up with our party to deliver it to the proper owner. I gave them all the money I had about me, lamenting that I was so far removed from my baggage as to be unable to reward so much honesty as it deserved.

In eight leagues from the Arroyo we arrived on the steep picturesque bank of the Rio Limon, a clear beautiful stream about two hundred yards wide, at this turn running to the eastward over several small falls which forbade its navigation even by canoes. Riding two miles further through the woods we again came to the river, and crossed it at a ford about three feet deep, between two small rapids, above and below which alligators sometimes resort. This river joins the Tamoin, and in the rainy seasons is said to be very impetuous, and dangerous to cross, scarcely a year passing without some people being drowned at the fording-place. We ascended the bank to a cluster of Rancho huts, amongst which we piled our baggage for the night, bought a kid, and cooked our supper. We had travelled about thirty-six miles over a good but uninteresting road, through a close wil-

derness, chiefly of mimosas, yielding abundance of gum, which would well repay any persons who would be at the trouble of collecting it. The Mesquiti (an acacia) is the tree that yields most of this substance, which I believe to be the gum Arabic. The long narrow pods of the mesquiti have when ripe a most agreeable saccharine flavour, somewhat resembling that of the Locust-bean, so common in the Mediterranean. The wood of the tree is very close and hard, and the charcoal made from it is considered superior to any other. The temperature in the shade was 98° , in the sun 114° ; and it continued throughout the night at 80° .

May 20.—Setting out at 8 o'clock, and riding through a forest of fan palms, tall bamboos, and fine timber-trees, we came to a transparent little stream, near which three deer of reddish colour and the size of our fallow-deer were feeding; and in five miles more stopped to water our cattle in another rivulet, gurgling over flat ledges of clay slate, on which there was not the slightest deposit of mud or weeds, and closely overshadowed by fine evergreens. I lay down on one of these ledges

under a shady tree, and let the waters of "La Richuela" flow over me for half an hour. Riding six miles, we ascended the steep rocky "Cerro de las Cucharas" by a bad and difficult path, under a heat of 94° in the shade; and again descending to a plain covered with fan palms and acacias, in about twelve miles reached a few huts called "Chamal," on the beginning of the first ascent to the Table-land*. We had the precaution to put up our tent here, and at midnight heard the waters from a thunder-cloud rush like a river past us.

May 21.—We set out very early in the morning to ascend the "Cuesta de Chamal" by a rocky and fatiguing path, rising, I should imagine, about a thousand feet above the village. In four weary miles we passed this "mule-fatiguing" place and crossed a smaller Cerro, whence we descended to a flat verdant valley, in the centre of which, some time before noon, we reached the pretty "villa" or town of Santa Barbara. In this vale I saw for

* The Barometer at this place stood at 29.652. Thermometer 86° .

the first time, in Mexico, bright green fresh-looking herbage, as verdant as that of our English fields. Nothing could be more striking than the change perceptible in one morning's ride over the mountains,—on the other side of which, the whole way from the sea coast, the grasses were of the colour of blighted corn.

We stopped here for a time, at two small huts within an inclosure, and I stretched myself under the shade of the two first orange-trees I had met with, from which in a few minutes a kind woman brewed me a glass of cool orangeade. This she accompanied with such good stewed meat and white thin Tortillas, that I began to imagine myself once more in a civilized country. I went out afterwards to procure shoes for my mule, and passed through the town, in which there are few buildings with any pretensions to be called houses; but the huts are many of them situated within slight inclosures, where small fresh-looking trees were growing. In the Plaza are two of a magnificent size, with immense heads and thick bright leaves, and beneath

their shade a number of country-people were holding a kind of Sunday's market.

The church, which externally was but half completed and looked like a ruin, had three bells on its tower: and I may here remark, that subsequently I observed many other village churches of Spanish architecture, of which the exterior had never been completed, although within was to be seen all the glare of Catholic finery.

At five I started again to join the cargo mules, and rode four or five miles over a grassy plain, which near the mountains bore marks of the plough, and the recent gathering in of the maize harvest. In order to cut off three leagues of the Camino Real, by which the loaded mules were to travel, we crossed a small mountain named "Sierita de los Muertos;" and how we reached the other side without having killed ourselves and animals, or broken any limbs, is to me quite marvellous: I never saw so bad a path,—amongst immense fragments of rocks, and deep holes worn by the rains between them. I would strongly advise all tra-

vellers who have any regard for their own necks, or compassion for their poor mules, to take the longer route, rather than attempt this place by the light only of a rising moon, as we foolishly did. This was once, if report may be credited, the regular Indian road of communication; and might have done very well for such active people as the ancient inhabitants, or the goats, but is not fit to be traversed by horsemen or laden mules. Stumbling our way over a stony descent, we crossed a cultivated plain for about three or four miles, and reached a few huts named "La Laja," inhabited by the labradores of the maize-grounds.

We here slept in a little shed, without knowing where the cargoes had stopped in the mountains.

I heard of them however, on the following morning (the 22nd), as I sat on a stone eating my breakfast of hot Tortillas,—a general article of sustenance in this country*, which I may endeavour to describe before the mules come up.

* The maize was prepared in precisely the same manner before the Conquest. See Bernal Diaz, and others.

The maize of which the Tortillas are composed is first parboiled, to cleanse and soften the grain, and then, in a quantity sufficient for the day's consumption, is left to cool.

For the purpose of crushing or mashing the maize, the women have a large square block of black lava or basalt, about two feet in length and sixteen inches broad, which stands on two, three, or four legs, so arranged as to give it a gentle slope. There is a very slightly elevated rim on either side, and the great solidity and weight keep the stone steady, while the operator bruises the maize with a long stone, not unlike a rolling-pin, which is held at each end, and so moved that it crushes the grain to paste, and at the same time pushes it down to a bowl placed ready to receive it.

This process is gone through once, twice, or more, according to the fineness required; and where great care is taken, it is passed through a fine sieve. A lump of this paste is then taken and patted skilfully between the hands until it becomes as thin as a light pancake; and the great art con-

sists in thus flattening it out without breaking the edges. The cake is then laid on a smooth plate of iron or flat earthenware, which is placed over some charcoal or wood embers, and kept at a certain heat: here, first one and then the other side of the Tortilla receives a toasting, and great care is taken that it should not be at all browned. The grand object in the latter part of the process is to serve up the Tortillas hot and hot, as fast as possible, in a clean napkin; and a slow eater who begins his first Tortilla, will find twenty or thirty piled in a smoking heap at his elbow long before he has made any progress with his dinner.

The making of Tortillas is so important an art, that in the houses of respectable people a woman, called from her office "Tortillera," is kept for this express purpose; and it sounds very oddly to the ear of a stranger during meal times, to hear the rapid patting and slapping which goes forward in the cooking-place until all demands are satisfied.

From the Rancho of La Laja we began the ascent of the Cuesta del Contactero, an immensely

precipitous mountain thickly covered with wood; and having ridden two hours over a terrible road, we reached the summit, on which is a cave containing a most miraculous picture of the Blessed Virgin, in the side of a steep rock. The cave is about the size of a sentry-box, although somewhat higher, and is shaded by magnificent oaks: it is composed of a light-coloured stalactite, with which all the surrounding limestone rocks are thickly coated; and the projections or irregularities have formed small niches and crevices, which a lively faith has metamorphosed into a representation of Holy subjects. A large shapeless hollow in the top of the cave is considered as the Glory over a figure of Maria Santissima, which good Catholics see most clearly delineated on the smooth back of the cave. I confess that my heretical eyes saw nothing but several of those irregularly waving lines which are perceptible in most rocks of this kind; but being directed by a border of tawdry paper and tinsel roses, I was enabled to discover something like the outline of a large sack. To this my Arrieros

climbed up and paid most profound adoration ; pointing out to me afterwards, the face, eyes, mouth, and beauties of the Blessed figure, in whose arms they also discerned the Holy Child as clearly as possible !—The cave stands at an elevation above the road of about twenty-five feet, and is ascended by climbing up the rocks, now worn in many places as smooth as glass by the devout persons who have ascended to pay their adoration.

“The Holy picture of Maria Santissima de Santa Barbara was discovered many hundred years ago by a priest, who when travelling found a number of Indians performing their idolatrous ceremonies on the summit of this mountain ;—a circumstance which so fired his holy zeal, that he determined on the reformation of these Pagans by a miracle. Seeing a quantity of bushes growing out of this cave, (in which it is certain no bushes could ever have grown,) he ordered his Christian attendants to fire them ; and when their flame was extinguished, the figure of the Mother of God was seen stamped, as it is to this day, on the solid rock.”

—A general baptism was the natural result of such a manifestation; and the good Padres of Santa Barbara have ever since derived a comfortable revenue from the miracle.

From this sanctified spot, in about three miles we gradually descended to the delightful valley of Los Gallitos, embosomed in the Cordilleras, and clothed with a bright short sward, on which a quantity of fine cattle were feeding. It is a little space, three or four miles in length and about half as broad; and through its centre, amongst picturesque irregularities of ground, flow two small clear streams as they descend from the surrounding mountains which are thickly clothed to their summits with magnificent oaks. Several spaces in the valley are fenced off and ploughed; and the snug cottages, with domestic animals wandering near them, reminded me forcibly of the scenery in some of the small Swiss vales.

Pitching the tent, we lay down in a temperature of 82°, to sleep on the fresh soft grass. A little rain fell during the night, and the Rancheros in-

formed me that showers towards midnight occurred almost constantly; so that a perpetual verdure reigns in this charming place. This valley, with another equal to it in richness and beauty and a short space to the left, belongs to the Carmelite Friars of San Luis, who are also the possessors of a variety of others of the most fruitful spots in this part of the country.

May 23.—We began the ascent of the Cerro de los Gallos very early in the morning, that our animals in this laborious journey might not be exposed to the full heat of the day. In an hour and a half the saddle-mules reached the summit, and in another hour the cargoes joined us*.

On the mountain top we found blackberries in ripe fruit and flower, and the wild geranium of our English hedges abounded; oaks, which were the only trees, formed a noble forest. Hence we descended two miles to a little green plain, and breakfasted at a solitary hut, after which the road again

* The Barometer here stood at 25·750. Temperature 65°; while in the valley it was 27·156. Temperature 79°.

became exceedingly bad and stony, amongst rugged hills for about nine miles, when by a long rocky descent we at last reached the lower country, arid and dusty, cut up by the deep irregular channels of mountain torrents, and nearly bare of trees*. In many places it had been extensively ploughed, and was lying fallow. On our right, at a mile distance from the road, was a lake of two miles in circumference, which is said to be quite salt, and no living creatures are found in its waters. At about half a mile to the left is the ruin of an Aztec building, which I sketched, and then ascended. The base, stretching in diameter about thirty paces, rises in the form of a portion of a cone; it is very neatly built, and has been entirely faced with

* On the burning gravelly soil I caught an animal of the Lizard tribe, which is called "Cameleon" by the natives. It was about the size of the palm of the hand, and nearly of the form of a turtle's shell. Its skin was coarse, of a dingy yellow barred with dusky brown, and a number of rows of fleshy prickles or points ran longitudinally over its back and sides. The tail was very short; the whole creature flat, and so lethargic as not to attempt its escape. This animal is figured by Clavigero under the name of "Tepajaxin."

flat unhewn stones, and has others projecting at intervals, as if for steps. This part has been much defaced by the Indians, who live in a hut near it, having carried away the stones to build a wall for a cattle yard; enough however remain to show what it has been. The base rises about twenty feet, and on its summit is a kind of walk or parapet round a small tower, which is now only about ten feet higher; and the whole edifice is filled with hard earth or clay, in which the Indians have found several stone and earthenware figures: some of the latter of these, although much mutilated, I purchased of their children. I should conceive, from the shape of this building, that it must either have been a Teocalle (or temple) or some very large altar of sacrifice, since several smaller ones, which resemble it in form but are only three or four feet in height, are still said to exist in the neighbourhood.

Hence we rode over the dull, dusty, and most uninteresting country, bearing here and there a stunted bush or a Yucca-tree, and in eight miles reached

Tula, (I believe a city,) which with the exception of the Plaza, where are a few ruinous houses, is composed of huts built of large bricks of unburnt clay, called Adobes. This, with the dust, the palm-trees and the pulque* (which in its sweet and fermented state also has precisely the same smell and flavour as the Lackbi† of Africa), reminded me most forcibly of Morzouk, the capital of Fezzan, as I rode up the broad dusty street of huts, under the glare of a scorching sun, to a Meson in the Plaza, where we procured a bare room. Our lodging was opposite the church, at which, hearing music in the evening, I found a crowd of people with a young woman who was bearing on her head a little dead child, dressed in coloured papers so arranged as to represent a robe, and tied to a board by a white handkerchief. Round the body were stuck a profusion of artificial flowers; the face was un-

* This is the first place at which I found the *Agave Americana* or Maguey cultivated for the purpose of extracting Pulque; of which as there is a great consumption, I soon found there was also a great deal of drunkenness.

† Inpissated juice of the Date-palm.

covered, and the little hands tied together as if in prayer. A fiddler and a man playing on a guitar accompanied the crowd to the church-door; and the mother having entered for a few minutes again appeared with her child, and walked off, accompanied by her friends, to the burying-place.

The father followed with another man, who assisted him with a lighted piece of wood in throwing up hand-rockets, of which he bore a large bundle under his arm. The whole ceremony was one of cheerfulness and gaiety, since all children who die young are supposed to escape purgatory and to become "Angelitos*" at once. I was informed that the burial would be followed by a fandango, in token of rejoicing that the babe had been taken from this world.—It is doubtless the duty of Christians to be resigned to their afflictions; but I am sure that few English women could carry their first and only infant to its grave, with smiling countenances; and I equally can

* Little angels.

answer for the inability of the men to throw up rejoicing rockets when their first-born is taken from them. I entered the church, which was neat, and, according to custom, crowded with images: before one of these a sallow wretched man was kneeling, with his arms extended for so long a time that it became painful to look upon him, and I left him to perform his agonizing penance ungazed upon by the eye of curiosity; since whatever may be the errors of the creed which imposes bodily suffering as an atonement for sin, his was an act of fervent piety, and, as such, was sacred. Hence I visited a school, attracted by the noise of seventeen little boys repeating at the full stretch of their variously toned throats the "Ordinanzas" of the Church, each one bawling with all his zeal and with all his strength. Their master, a fat, lazy, good-tempered-looking man, fairly lost his patience in endeavouring to make me hear, through the din, his questions as to "whether the Spaniards would come again and hang all the revolutionists;" and soon gave them

their dismissal, after they had knelt down and rapidly screamed out two prayers which he named to them : each child then came and inclined his shoulder to receive the blessings of the master and the stranger, and after this very pretty little ceremony they all ran off whooping and hallooing down the street. I saw but one book in this extraordinary seat of learning ; but the master very seriously assured me, that several of the boys could nevertheless read.

On my return I found a white well-dressed lady of Tula, with three very pretty children, in a sad passion with my servant, who had turned a deaf ear to her offers of purchasing one of my three English fowls, of which I wished to carry the breed to the interior. No excuses would satisfy her ; and on my appearance to confirm the refusal of two Tula chickens for one English, she indignantly brushed out of the room, declaring that she had been rightly informed that “ the English were ill-natured animals.” This well-bred woman was the most considerable person in the place, and my

hostess was all astonishment at the man who could refuse her any thing. I slept in a wretched room, for which I paid an exorbitant price, and had, besides, the misery of being obliged to attend to the complaints of a long list of ladies, all either pregnant or hoping to be so. My landlady had spread a report of my being a "cunning man," from my having told her some extraordinary truths (of which her husband had previously informed me), as to her name, her being thirty-three years of age, &c. ; and my having satisfied her anxious inquiries as to the sex of her next child, which I informed her "might possibly be a boy." I have already remarked how much Tula resembled Morzouk ; but these circumstances confirmed the comparison, since I here had to answer precisely the same questions as I had been asked by the African women, to females not at all wiser than those poor despised Negroes. My own country-women would scarcely credit some of the anecdotes I could tell of those neglected creatures in the northern states of this Republic ; and would not

believe it possible that the females of any country called civilized, could be so barbarously kept in a state of the most perfect ignorance.

May 24.—Early on the 24th we set out over a parched plain, studded with dwarf mimosas, palms, and tunas. At about twelve miles we passed a few huts, the Rancho de la Boréga, on our right, and on the left of the road saw a venerable-looking old man sitting beneath the shade of an acacia, in the branches of which, immediately over his silvery head, a crucifix was placed. Imagining that this picturesque personage was a hermit, I rode up to salute him; when he lifted a cloth which hung over a bough, and displayed to me some bowls of “Atole de leche,” a composition of the finer and more glutinous parts of maize, boiled milk, sugar and cinnamon, equal to any of our custards. We each took a bowl, and discussed its contents with spoons made of palm leaves, completing the meal by the purchase of a quantity of the fruit of the tuna, or prickly pear, with which several laden asses were proceeding to

Tula. An Indian from the interior passed us here, carrying his bow and a handful of light arrows headed with small narrow pieces of copper.

Riding forward about ten miles, we passed over a rising ground entirely covered with a stream of lava *, which in large irregular masses appeared to have issued from two slight elevations on the left, bearing all the aspect of having once formed part of a volcanic crater. The hills immediately on the right were of limestone.

Not far off Flores showed me a rock, of which there runs a tradition that "an old very strong necromantic Indian, flying with his treasure at the time of the Conquest, brought it to this place, and by his strength and art overturning the stone, buried his riches beneath it. They still lie there, and can only be obtained by the stone being again overset by any number of men under eight, which number destroys the charm and the gold is lost: seven Arrieros had re-

* The name of "Mal Pays" is applied throughout the country to places of this nature.

peatedly tried their powers, but without effect." All the space round the stone had actually been scraped up by the credulous; but I observed that these efforts to overturn it had been made in one direction, at which a projecting point was the impediment. Digging beneath this, we three Englishmen assisted by Flores, tumbled the magic rock over with such force that it split in two, but found no treasure to repay us for our trouble.

Flores told the story triumphantly to all we met, and who seemed acquainted with the rock, which I lamented having broken, since a favourite object of Arriero tradition had thereby lost its charm.

During the greater part of our ride we had been accompanied by a patient of mine,—a mul-t-ee, whom I had cured of fever and ague; with his master, a very drunken old Ranchero, who talked politics and drank *Vino Mescal* (a liquor extracted from a species of maguey,—and re-extracted by him from a bottle which hung at his saddle-bow,) until he became very troublesome and tormenting. This man, the owner of a large estate,

was one of many I had recently met who were in sad alarm that Ferdinand the VIIth was coming over to cut the throat (and here he drew his hand across his neck) of every Mexican. He also with the multitude could not be persuaded that Spain and Europe were not two names for the same country; London he believed to be a nation of itself, England an inferior province, but both occupying remote corners of the king of Spain's dominions. As for France, he affirmed that it was but another name for Panama.

At six miles from Mal Pays we arrived at the Rancho del Coronel, having ridden the whole way in one unceasing cloud of dust. In a hut here I found two merry Silenus-looking old fellows on a large bull's hide, sitting in high glee over an immense jar of pulque, very drunk and tormentingly polite to myself and each other; lavishing all the compliments of the country on their own acknowledged, and my supposed merits. Happily for me, the mules were able to pass on to La Viga, two leagues from "el Coronel."

From hence I sent forward one of my people to Mr. Price, my medical friend, who was two days in advance. The man had long fancied that each dusty respiration was to be his last; and without any serious illness, was determined on killing himself by the mere force of imagination. We pitched our tent on a barren plain; and when the sun went down found the night so cold, that we were glad to warm ourselves by drawing water for our cattle by the rude machinery placed over a well of bad water ninety feet in depth.

May 25.—At daylight on the 25th the thermometer stood at 65° , which after the heat of the low country appeared almost a freezing temperature. Our day's ride of thirty miles was over dull uninteresting ground, covered at intervals with mimosas, which by natural outlets yield a great quantity of fine transparent gum. The maguey was very abundant as far as the eye could reach, and dust and whirlwinds half-blinded us. At about twenty-five miles we came to a very stony hill, on which were standing about three dozen

huts named "Buena Vista;" and in five miles more we reached the Hacienda del Quelintal, at the foot of a similar hill, where I joined Mr. Price. Here the water, which can be procured only from wells thirty-five feet in depth, is harsh and unpleasant. We took up our abode in the hut of a very poor man, and at night lay outside beneath the eaves, while near us reposed our host, his wife, and eleven children, forming a line of no small extent; each little child was rolled in the ragged blanket which constituted its clothing by day, and the air of contentment which reigned throughout this miserably poor but uncomplaining family, would have taught a wholesome lesson to a dissatisfied man. This was not the only time I had occasion to admire the mild unrepining manners of a class of the Mexican population, of whose poverty no idea can be formed but by eye-witnesses.

Our host paid two dollars per annum as ground-rent, and three more for a sufficient space in which to sow half a fanega of maize, on the produce of which the family in great measure de-

pended. I wished that the poor fellow might have some pulque to cheer his heart; but his landlord required five dollars a hundred for the magueys, although thousands and tens of thousands were growing wild and decaying all over the plain*.

May 26.—We left Quelintal at seven, and I had now the satisfaction of having Mr. Price for my fellow-traveller during the remainder of the journey. The road lay over several low sierras and rugged paths for four leagues, until we reached a snug cluster of huts called Rincón. Here we found a sick man in a raging fever, to whom his friends were administering a rich stew of blood and sweet herbs. He lay moaning in a corner of our room, across which a rope was stretched, supporting four quarters of recently killed beef, with other morsels hanging dangling and bloody. A fat woman very drunk sat on the threshold of the door; while another still fatter, and but little more sober, took her station on a bed close to our table, from whence she helped herself to our dinner and

* The Barometer here stood at 26·300. Thermometer 79°.

whatever else she fancied; taking possession at length of our jar of pulque, which she shared liberally with her friend at the door. We found it impossible to escape from these two Bacchantes, our tent being like an oven*, and were therefore obliged to exercise our patience until the sun went down.

In consequence of Mr. Price having bled the sick man, we were sadly tormented by patients, real and imaginary, under the immediate chapero-nage of the fattest old woman, who finished the day by coming with some more invalids into our tent after dark, squatting her spacious person close to my face as I lay in bed, thereby breaking the sack-ing, and in consequence receiving from my naked foot an impetus which sent her in an instant through the tent door.

May 27.—The thermometer at dawn was 68°. All our patients were better, although some little discontent was shown at our not having instant

* At two P. M. Thermometer 88° in the shade; in the sun 118°, and in the tent 104°. The heat of the ground was 137°.

remedies for the blind, the fat, and the lean ; palsy, pregnancy, and its reverse. At seven we travelled over a series of bad roads amongst the mountains ; and at ten miles passed the Rancho of San Isidro, in which was the only cottage I had ever met with where any attention had been paid to exterior appearance ; some climbing plants were clustering over its front, and from amongst them peeped the two first roses I had seen in blossom. In twelve miles more we reached the huts of Puerto San José *, in a dell amidst the mountains, where, under a fine shady tree, a gay party were assembling to set out on horseback to a wedding at Peotillas. My servant Marriot was here attacked with strong fever, but was much relieved by copious bleeding.

In the evening I bathed in one of the troughs at which the cattle are watered, and found the temperature of the well (67°) so cold in comparison with the air (84°), that on plunging into the water the circulation left my fingers. While dress-

* Barometer 25.330. Thermometer 83° .

ing I suddenly heard a loud bleating, and in an instant above four hundred milk-white goats sprang down the side of the steep little ravine, and rushed to a well at which young shepherds and girls were drawing water for their evening's drinking. The stillness and clearness of the star-light evening, the picturesque dresses of the shepherds and young women, each with their favourite kid, recalled to the mind the description of the Patriarchal Ages, when the maidens attended their fathers' flocks, and assembled round the wells with the shepherds as the sun declined. We slept under a mimosa near the fires of our muleteers, with whom on the morning of the 28th we had much trouble, as their mules were tired and exhausted, and none others could be hired to supply their places.

In three leagues over a stony road we reached the Rancho del Tejou, and passed on to a plain on which the number of whirlwinds was quite extraordinary. We had repeatedly seen a few of them, but on this day they appeared to have assumed a new form, raising the dust to a height of

two or three hundred feet in straight columns which preserved their perpendicularity and moved but slowly over the plain, while many continued to turn rapidly on their axes without any perceptible progressive motion.

After riding three leagues further we reached the plain of Peotillas, where the younger Mina, having but 172 men, including himself and staff, so gallantly defeated Armiñan with a force of 1700 disciplined troops *. The Spaniards were nearly all destroyed, and we visited the long grave in which many of them were buried, beneath a rude cross of wood, whereon was engraved

*Vn Padre N^{ro} y un Abe Maria Gloriado
—y un Sudario Por Yntinsion de las Ani-
mas q^e estan Sepultadas en este Campo.*

The field of battle was covered with low bushes,

* “On the body of a lieutenant-colonel was found the order of the day, which showed that the force actually engaged, was six hundred and eighty infantry of the European regiments of Estremadura and America, and eleven hundred of the Rio Verde and Sierra Gorda cavalry, and that the rear guard consisted of three hundred men.”

and of course well calculated to favour a force such as Mina's, which consisted for the greater part of raw undisciplined Indians and country-people, who in this covered ground might be disposed to better advantage than a more regular body of men.

I was extremely interested by the narrative of Mina's campaign, written with great feeling by Mr. Robinson, and full of the interesting incidents which occurred to that brave but ill-fated man, during his short but astonishing career in Mexico. One league from the field is the Hacienda of Peotillas, situated at the foot of a low rugged chain of hills. There are a few good dwellings here, with a church and store, of stone. In the portico of the Administrador were hanging two stuffed wolves, and a neighbouring tree was garnished with the bodies of numerous coyotes, the jackals of the country. I was fortunate in visiting the Hacienda at the time of watering the horses and selecting some for sale. Above three hundred were careering about in a long inclosed space,

with several Vaqueros on horseback and on foot attending them with their lasos.

Wishing to purchase a horse, I was enabled to see the laso exercised in its utmost perfection; and the dexterity with which particular animals were selected and arrested for my inspection from the herd at full speed, was far beyond what I had expected. The whole scene was of the most animating kind; the wild galloping horses, the mirth and activity of the men on foot, who seemed delighted in showing their skill, was above all things pleasing. I purchased here a very good pacing horse for twelve dollars, equal to 2*l.* 8*s.*, and then rode on to a small tank at about a mile distance, where for the first time in my journey I was refused admittance into a hut until the tent arrived, although a gale was blowing and we were half smothered with dust and gravel. Our road this day had been so uninteresting, that I now gave up in despair all hope of agreeable travelling on this part of the so much vaunted "Table Land of Anahuac."

What with the excessive heat and monotonous surface of the Tierra Caliente, the difficult and fatiguing ascents of the mountains, and the clouds of dust of the "Temperate Regions;" I began to be rather tired of my journeying on a road so totally destitute of interest or incident. My chests and furniture were split by the sun, or by the laden mules knocking them against the trees; and instead of being twelve days, as was expected, we had now been travelling fifteen. Fifty miles of our journey yet remained to be performed, with jaded mules, and Arrieros sick with ague and fever. I do not complain either of my food or lodging, being always grateful for them whether good or bad; but fastidious persons would do well never to enter the Mexican territories *viâ* Tampico and San Luis. It should be the constant axiom with the stranger, that whatever feeds or covers the people amongst whom he travels, will unquestionably nourish and shelter himself; and on this principle, he will find no difficulties in earthen floors, in mud huts, tortillas, or ropes of beef. In

the afternoon my sick servant was again bled, and I decided on leaving him to the kind care of Mr. Price and riding into San Luis to prepare lodgings for their reception, leaving them to divide the journey into two days.

May 29.—At daylight therefore on the 29th I set forward with Flores, in a temperature of 50° , which by noon rose to 84° . In seven miles we passed a few huts called La Colorada, and in ten more reached a solitary hovel near the road, where Flores was taken very ill, and I bled him copiously, after which and a few hours sleep he was sufficiently relieved to go on again. A day had scarcely passed since leaving the coast without my having met with some persons labouring under sharp fevers and agues, which it appears are not confined to the low country, but, on the contrary, become rather more frequent on the Table Land, notwithstanding its reputed salubrity. In twenty-six miles more we entered the town of San Luis at sunset, soon finding our kind agent Mr. Dall, who obligingly invited me to his house. Our road,

as usual, had been desolate and uninteresting, with few trees, but great abundance of gigantic nopals, the trunks of which were many feet in diameter. Hares and rabbits were very numerous, and so tame as scarcely to leave the road when we passed them.

At about seven or eight miles from the town the irrigated gardens and fields commenced, and broad straight roads, covered with dust to above a horse's fetlocks, crossed them in all directions. In the outskirts, Flores pointed out to me two graves containing a number of Spaniards who had been killed in the war, and on which a singular figure was scratched or scraped every night by the unearthly hand (as was generally believed) of a soul in purgatory. The priests, with their usual anxiety to prevent imposition, are said to have set a watch to detect the nocturnal limner, but without effect; for as we passed, the mysterious mark was still visible. Not far from the place is a small building with holes like those in a post-office window, into which a number of inscriptions invite all good

Christians to put their money to purchase masses for the Almas de Purgatorio (souls in purgatory), which to heretical eyes soon discovers the mysterious nocturnal artist.

May 30th.—I rambled out early in the morning to see the market of which I had heard so much; and was not disappointed as to its neatness and novelty, although I did not find such abundance or variety of fruits and vegetables as I had been led to expect. It is held in a large square, and presents to a European an appearance so unlike anything to be met with in the Old World, as to be very interesting. On entering, I passed a long line of Indian and other women squatted on the ground and selling roses and nosegays. Some dealt in fruits, others had coloured pulques in glasses; and there were not a few occupying themselves over little charcoal fires, preparing cakes or frying meat for the consumption of the country-people, Arrieros and Leperos, who swarm in the street and market. Further on, the square was filled by little spaces ranged in

lines and shaded by a mat or two, erected on a pole in the form of an umbrella, or by some rude kind of awning on four sticks. Here peppers, legumes and fruits, are spread upon mats on the ground for sale, while the venders sit cross-legged or squatted by their goods,—some indolently lounging and smoking their cigars; others dozing half asleep, and wrapped in their variously coloured Serapes. In most instances each stall merely appeared to contain the produce of the gardens of those who attended it, for many did not at first contain a dollar's worth of goods or fruits; and when these were sold, a new comer was at liberty to occupy the stall. On the opposite side however to that for the fruits and vegetables are many larger standings, in which glass, crockery, cutlery, articles of leather, bits, &c. are exposed for sale, always at double, sometimes at treble the prices for which they are ultimately sold. On one side of the square is a long colonnade or piazza in front of a large public building called "Alhondiga," which consists of a quantity of spacious stores

for corn and merchandize, and is of great extent. In the colonnade are a number of little temporary stalls, at which very inferior European hardware, trinkets, looking-glasses, and other articles, are sold at an exorbitant price. The meat market is not in the same square as that for other goods, but in a short broad street running out from one corner of it. The flesh is in large coarse dirty-looking lumps, either baking in the sun or covered with flies; and the shambles suffer much by comparison with the other market. In addition to the fixed traders in these places, a number of hawkers are constantly to be seen mingled with the crowd, and offering to the by-standers boots, blankets, skins, whips; in short, every variety of produce, and all selling on commission for the manufacturers, to whom a certain sum is returned,—the broker appropriating as much as he can, to cover his own expenses of time and lungs. In passing through the streets many cages of birds are seen suspended within the wooden barred windows, of which the *sinsonthli*, or mocking-bird,

seems to be the favourite. These are very abundant in the surrounding country, yet fifty dollars are considered as by no means a high price for a good singer. In the afternoon I waited on the governor with my passport, and found him to be a plain well-bred old man, apparently much respected *. Notwithstanding his situation, he is a shop-keeper, and sells, or causes to be sold for him, all that variety of goods which may be found jumbled together in a Mexican store. This occupation is by no means considered a degradation, since there are few persons of consequence in the place who are not in the same circumstances; and many of the great men of the land actually keep drinking-houses. In returning home, the tinkling of a bell attracted my attention, and every one around me instantly fell on their knees: a carriage with two piebald mules had just drawn up before the cathedral door, and a priest in his robes enter-

* On the top of the Government-house, I saw for the first time the cap of liberty carved in wood and painted red, surmounting a large flag-staff.

ed it, followed by two choristers bearing censers after the Host, which he was conveying to some dying person. The guard turned out under arms, knelt and grounded their pieces and pulled off their caps, while the priest who carried the Host leant back comfortably in the coach and treated himself to a pinch of snuff. There are more kneelings and pulling off of hats at San Luis than at other places. No one passes the door of the Parroquia, or cathedral, without making a reverence bare-headed; and many good Christians perform the same marks of respect to the other churches. This obeisance is exacted from no one; but were a stranger to omit it, he would stand a very good chance of being insulted by the very bigoted populace, who still view with a jealous eye the heretical foreigners who have lately appeared amongst them.

At certain hours the bells of the Parroquia announce that all should be uncovered, and that a prayer should be recited, a rapid tinkling giving notice when the hats may be put on again. I la-

ment much that I was not in San Luis at the time of the ceremonies on the day of Corpus Christi, having heard that they were the most splendid exhibitions during the year. One of the images in this procession represented the Supreme Being bearing the Saviour in his lap.

In the evening I went to Flores' house to give him some medicines, as he was still very ill; he lived immediately opposite the Cock-pit, which I visited and found crowded to excess by all conditions of men, from the best-dressed persons to those who had but a portion of ragged blanket to cover them, but each carrying his own bird. The pit is a circular space, surrounded by seats of masonry and shaded by canvass; no money was paid for admittance. I saw much betting, and several stakes delivered into the hands of a kind of master of the ceremonies; but I did not remain to witness a fight which presently took place, and from which in less than five minutes three dead cocks were brought out. Bull-fights had recently been prohibited, but I believe much to the regret of the people. I visited the

Plaza de Toros, in which it has been the custom to hold a kind of wandering evening market, where all sorts of wearing apparel and other articles are hawked about. There are but few shops in San Luis at which any of these conveniences can be purchased, and it is therefore the usual custom to send them out to look for customers. Here also stolen goods are not unfrequently sold; but from the general use of the knife amongst the "valiant sons of Anahuac," I should be very unwilling to arrest a thief in the crowd of wild ill-looking fellows who frequent the evening mart. While each vender was auctioneering for himself, and a second Babel seemed to reign, the vesper bell tolled. A universal silence prevailed,—every head was bared, and all business was at a stand. At the next tinkle, bidding, cheating and quarrelling, were as instantly resumed. At dusk I again met the Host, preceded by men bearing lanthorns, on its return from a dying person.

The following story, which was related to me by several gentlemen of strict probity, serves to show

the present state of ignorance in medical science in San Luis Potosi. A physician, who was pointed out to me, was called to the assistance of a poor labourer with a ruptured blood-vessel. Ice was the only remedy known to stop the flow of blood, and none could be obtained until a priest should be sent for to confess the sufferer before he died. What then was to be done?—it was but too certain that the man would soon expire, unless means were found to arrest the effusion. The physician therefore had no resource but to sew up the poor wretch's mouth and nostrils; but even before the Host could be sent for, the miserable creature was, very naturally, suffocated.

May 31.—I visited the church of San Francisco, with the monastery attached to it, both handsome buildings, and according to report richly endowed. We were first ushered into a large court having a grass-plat in the centre, round which ran a corridor; and on the walls were hung a series of pictures descriptive of the life and actions of San Francisco. The saint is hungry, and our Saviour

is seen sitting at table with and helping him to the viands, while an angel brings him water to quench his thirst. He is represented, after his death, as sitting on the left hand of the Almighty, who is pictured as an aged man having on his right the Redeemer and the Virgin Mary. Some of the supposed miracles and conferences with the Divinity are beyond all description blasphemous; and the Friars informed me,—at the same time triumphantly pointing to a painting of the event,—that the saint had procured from God's own mouth the entire pardon of the sins of the world, as fully as was granted to Christ himself; but that the *Pope* of the age in which San Francisco lived, would not confirm the grant, and that mankind in consequence had been left in their blindness and sin!

I saw also a gorgeous painting of Christ transferring the marks of the cross from his own person to that of the saint, before the holy man was carried by angels to heaven. In an upper gallery the life of San Antonio is portrayed in a series of

miracles as profane as those of his brother saint below.

I should tire and shock my readers were I to tell them all; but one subject is so novel that I may be forgiven for describing it. This is the figure of an ass kneeling, with its mouth open, before the saint who holds the sacred wafer, and who has just had recourse to this miracle to convince a number of heretics who had doubted the actual presence. The interior of the church is handsome and airy, and in some places tastefully ornamented by good carved fretwork in stone. The greater part of the statues were of monkish saints in the robes of their various orders, which had a far better appearance than the gaudy dresses and tinsel of the usual figures. On the whole, there was good taste in the decorations of the church, and in one aisle is a chapel "most particularly blest (*de un modo muy singular*) by the Divine Presence," in which is a temple-shaped altar, very prettily executed in white and gold, and containing the only rational-looking statue of the Virgin I ever saw.

There were no spangled hoop petticoats, crowns, wigs, or artificial jewels ; but a handsome woman of the natural size, dressed in a robe of unglazed black silk, the folds of which hang gracefully over one arm. The bust is well proportioned, and covered to the throat, and the waist is encircled by a plain gold band. The contrast between this figure and the simple white temple is very striking, on account of the extreme plainness of the whole. There is but one good painting in the church, and this is a copy of the *Divino Rostro* (Divine Countenance) by a self-taught artist and architect, Señor Tresguerra. It is merely a representation of the head of our Saviour on a sheet, but beautifully executed ; and presented by the artist to the church, on condition of its supplying the place of a very ugly statue.

I had waited with anxiety Mr. Price's arrival with my sick servant, but received a letter from a place called "the Adobes," seven leagues distant, saying that he was unable to proceed further on that day ; which was greatly to be lamented, as not

a single comfort could be procured for the invalid: even the water, which was obtained from a tank, being thick and undrinkable.

June 1.—With much difficulty I hired a carriage to proceed on the following morning for my poor man. In the forenoon, being the eighth from the celebration of Corpus Christi, a temporary altar was erected in a small lower room at the corner of the House of Congress, or *Palácio*, which faces the *Parroquia*. From thence at ten o'clock a procession sallied forth and performed the circuit of the Square, which was crowded with people. Mass was read to the kneeling multitude; and the procession then returned in due form to the church, preceded by a number of ragged Indians and half-casts, playing on rude fiddles, guitars, and flutes, each according to his own particular fancy or ability. Then followed a confused mass of women, some carrying candles, others flowers, and four of them bearing a statue of San Cristoforo, who appeared to be some Catholic Hercules, he being dressed very like the ogre in Tom Thumb,

and wearing an enormous sword buckled round him with a broad buff belt. The platform on which he stood was ornamented with ears of ripe Indian corn, apples, flowers, and tinsel; and I observed that there was a great competition among the women for the honour of bearing this doughty saint. Next followed the Host, borne by a priest under a gaudy silk canopy, and attended by others in their robes of ceremony, each with his hands uplifted and devoutly pressed together, while their eyes wandered about the crowd in search of acquaintance, whom they acknowledged by a nod. The members of the Provincial Senate in full suits of black, and bare-headed, closed the procession. Don Francisco Tresguerra,—the artist whose “Divino Rostro” I had so much admired,—was so obliging as to visit me. I was quite charmed with the good sense and taste of this gentleman, who has devoted his talents, I believe quite without benefit to himself, to the embellishment of San Luis, where some of his works, both in painting and architecture, reflect the highest credit on his abili-

ties. He was at this time building a theatre at one extreme end of the town, an altar-piece at the other; and painting besides, on a very large scale, for three or four different churches: he has never left the Republic, and from his age, now about fifty-five, it is not probable that he will ever gratify his prevailing desire to visit Europe. The exterior architecture of the churches of San Luis is generally very heavy, overloaded with carved ornaments and ill-executed statues of saints; yet at a short distance they give a magnificent appearance to the town, which contains many very large buildings. The *Palacio*, now the Provincial House of Congress, is of this number, and forms one side of the *Plaza de las Armas*, which has an excellent fountain of water in the centre. The *Parroquia* occupies a portion of the opposite side, and on its right are the soldiers' quarters. The two other sides are filled with shops and dwelling-houses, it being the custom for the owners of good mansions to let the lower story as a shop. Mr. Dall's store was in the lower part of what was once the *Cus-*

tom-house, but now is the dwelling of a rich widow, one of the most important persons in the city. She kept her carriage and pair of mules, and was a great lover of the fine arts, as might be seen by the very extraordinary collection of little carved figures and toys nailed round the door of her Sala. Amongst the large public buildings is a very salutary one for the confinement of refractory women,—jealous fathers or husbands enjoying the privilege of shutting up their daughters or wives ! The church attached to this virtue-guarding edifice is very dark and gloomy, and grated off at one end like a nunnery, so that the poor women cannot be seen, although they themselves are able to peep as much as they please. The large house in which the Inquisition was formerly held is now a private dwelling, and does not possess that gloomy aspect which one expects to find in such a place. The Meson Nuevo (New Inn) is a neat clean house, the cooking good, and the people civil and obliging : but in the rooms there is no furniture of any kind ; and the rent, stabling, and cooking ex-

penses are all on separate accounts. The shops of San Luis are good and well stocked, those for liquors being by far the most numerous. All leather, iron-work, crockery and coarse goods, are sold, as I have already observed, in the Plaza de los Toros. The town is plentifully supplied with water from wells, but there are also regular water-carriers who bear four large earthen jars in a kind of wheelbarrow. Pulque is sold at almost every corner, and its effects on the natives are often very visible. To the abundance of this and other liquors may be attributed the frequent and sanguinary quarrels at this place, and the numerous assassinations committed, chiefly among the lower orders, who all carry knives concealed under their blanket, although the laws formally prohibit weapons. Very slight provocation is sometimes sufficient to make one man stab another; and two murders of this kind took place in open day during my stay at San Luis. The assassin in such cases is merely confined for a few days, and then set at liberty to commit fresh enormities. Sometimes,

but rarely, he is sent as a convict for two years to Vera Cruz. One of the murders before alluded to took place in consequence of a dispute between two men of different villages, each of whom claimed for his Pueblo the merit of having sent the largest nosegay as a present to the Virgin at the feast of Corpus Christi;—to end the matter, one very deliberately stabbed the other, wiped his knife, and was taken into custody, well knowing that in a few days he should regain his liberty. To instance still further the state of the laws in the northern parts of the Republic of Mexico at this period, I may relate that a German gentleman some time since was attacked on the road to Durango by a robber, who having fired at and missed him, was instantly shot dead. The gentleman was afterwards fined five hundred dollars for killing instead of taking him prisoner and bringing him to Durango, whence after a few days confinement he would again have been turned out upon the world.—The principal streets are lighted by large lanthorns, yet all who pass take the precaution of

going armed, although an express permission must be first obtained to wear a sword. Peaceable men are thus prohibited from carrying weapons of defence, and when killed, their murderers remain unpunished. Three hundred permits to carry arms had been transmitted from Mexico, but they were very insufficient for the principal inhabitants. The military at this time consisted of nearly eight hundred men, of whom about half were infantry, and the others horse artillery, who all appeared in tolerable order, when compared with the wretched rabble I had seen acting as soldiers at Tampico.

June 2.—The coach arrived in the evening with Mr. Price and Marriot, and our invalid was somewhat better, but exceedingly weak. A fresh accession of fever however came on (June 3), and continued unabated until Saturday night, when the poor fellow breathed his last at midnight. In closing the eyes of poor Marriot I lost an invaluable servant and friend, who had followed my good and ill fortunes for six successive years. He had been with

me in the brightest as well as the most gloomy days of my existence; and the services on which we had been engaged together, equally attached the master and the servant. In this land of bigotry the poor fellow would have been denied a grave, had I not, when he was dead, sent for a priest, who however on arriving turned unfeelingly to me, exclaiming "Umph! he has died without confession—his soul is lost, and it will be needless for me to see him." Yet my having called in a priest was sufficient declaration that the deceased was a Catholic, and by the kind assistance of Mr. Dall I found no difficulty in having him interred in the Campo Santo with the ceremonies of the Catholic Church. On Sunday evening (June 4,) Mr. Dall and two other American gentlemen joined our little procession, carrying candles; and I saw my poor departed servant buried with proper decency.

June 5.—We visited this morning the public prison, filled with a half-naked ill-looking set of people mixed together in one common court, without any distinction on account of crime. Some

were playing at cards,—others spinning thread to procure means for subsistence; the guiltless man and the murderer enjoying the same degree of liberty,—viz. the range of the large court. The place was tolerably clean, but possessing to us an appearance of misery, which would not be felt by its inmates, accustomed as the lower classes here are to sleep on the bare ground. There was neither table nor bench, and the only furniture I saw was a huge pair of untenanted stocks. We afterwards went to the Carmelite church under the escort of a Spanish merchant, who procured us admission to the gardens also. The building is on an immense and magnificent scale, remarkably clean and airy, and having spacious corridors, with cells capable of containing a far greater number of monks than at present occupy them. The church is crowded with ornaments, which in some places have a grand effect; and there is a portion, over the door of the principal chapel, of most intricate and handsome carving in stone, reaching to the roof of the church. In several other parts the

fretwork is well executed, but with little regard to the rules of architecture.

Señor Tresguerra was at this time erecting a fine altar-piece of stone, which if not ruined by gilding cannot fail to be admired for its simplicity and elegance. There are many pictures of Elijah the patron saint of the Carmelites, who is accordingly introduced in a variety of fiery chariots, some few of which are well painted. In one picture illustrating that portion of the First Book of Kings, xviii. 44, where "there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand," the Virgin Mary in a splendid mantle is represented as sitting on the top of this cloud, with her hands closed in prayer; and a long account of the rain in the days of Ahab having been procured by her intercession, is subjoined in gold letters at one corner of the picture. I could not resist remarking to our guide, that the Virgin in an Old Testament picture was rather misplaced: but he very gravely assured me that on this occasion she actually did appear, whatever the Bible might say

about the matter. In the choir and galleries of the church are pictures of several well-authenticated miracles, particularly one of a poor nun, who being sick, had dared to provide a boiled fowl for her supper, contrary to the rules of her order, which forbade all use of flesh; she had just stuck her fork into the prohibited morsel, when the Virgin appeared to her,—like Sancho's physician at Barataria,—and prevented the unrighteous banquet, enjoining a long list of penances to the poor sick sinner for her crime. The Virgin, in fact, is introduced in Mexico into every painting, either before or since the flood, to the total exclusion of that homage which is due to God alone.

The Carmelites are very rich, and possess immense estates and Haciendas, which according to report will ere long be applied to the use of the Government. Having examined the church, we rambled through the extensive walled garden attached to it, round which were straight walks shaded almost to darkness by luxuriant vines. Apple- and pear-trees were very abundant, but

weeds more so. No taste was displayed in the laying-out the ground, which was irrigated from a large tank. I here saw the Grana, or Cochineal, in great abundance on some plants of Tuna, but it was never collected either for sale or use.

June 6.—We were so late in arranging our cargoes that we could not set out, as I had intended, for Zacatecas; and in the evening we rode to the Sanctuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, which is situated at a short distance from the town. An old lady, with an enormous goitre, introduced us to the church, where the Padre, her brother, sat praying with amazing volubility; and we walked about as we pleased, admiring the neatest temple we had seen, ornamented entirely in white and gold, and having few other pictures than those immediately relating to the Virgin of Guadalupe, whose legend is painted on the compartments round the dome. Her story has often been told by Mexican travellers, but I shall still give my version of it, after I shall have described my visit to her church near Mexico.

We were afterwards treated with cigars, chocolate, and politics, in which, as far as related to the disturbances in this country, the Padre showed himself well versed, having during the revolution headed a party of seventy Rancheros near León, who destroyed 450 regular Spanish infantry. I afterwards heard that our friend, at that time the Padre of Saltos de Barra, had been one of the most active of the many priests who took up arms against the Spaniards. Before leaving the Sanctuario he treated us with a view of San Luis from one of the high turrets, and waited patiently while I attempted a sketch of this most beautiful prospect. I found that Flores was still too ill to travel, and therefore left him behind, hiring another man to attend my horses.

June 7.—We quitted San Luis at 6 A.M. having sent forward the greater part of our luggage by Arrieros, and rode four or five miles over a plain thickly planted with maguey, from which the town is supplied with pulque. We met several of the natives with their donkeys laden with jars of this

favourite liquor, and drank some sweet and recent from the plant. At about three miles from San Luis on the road to Zacatecas, the view on looking back upon the town is very beautiful. We soon exchanged the smooth road for a stony one, and ascended the Cerros of "San Miguel Miskitiki," over which the travelling was as rough as it was possible to be. The rocks were of porphyry, chiefly of a red colour, and coated abundantly by beautiful mammellated chalcedony, which with fragments of jasper lay in great quantities in the road. In five leagues we descended a gorge in the mountains, and came suddenly on the retired romantic little village of San Miguel Miskitiki, situated in a deep rocky glen and half hidden by its flourishing trees. A mountain stream of very clear water runs through the ravine, and is crossed by a small picturesque bridge of two arches. Leaving San Miguel we came to higher ground with a flatter and better road, and at a quarter after one arrived at the Hacienda "La Parada," ten leagues from San Luis. The land is here extensively cul-

tivated, and in many places requires to be watered by irrigation from a large tank, in which I found several wild ducks and a very small species of diver. There is a kind of village and a church here, and we obtained lodging in a Meson, which according to custom in this country afforded nothing but shelter, water, and one small candle which is always given to the guests without extra charge.

June 8.—Thermometer 57°. At seven we started over a pretty good road, but a parched-up dusty country, thinly clothed with mimosa bushes, the maguey, and tuna. I here first saw a hummingbird, which flew off before I could approach it. Hares and partridges were very abundant, and I killed some for our dinner. On the road we met a coach drawn by eight mules, and having eight others running before it, guarded by a dozen odd-looking soldiers. Before noon we passed a small Rancho crowded with fine cattle, where we stopped for a time at a hut, and found a most excellent breakfast of fried pork and onions, milk and tor-

tillas, all which had been prepared for a Ranchero. We left the poor man nothing but the empty dishes, and the reals we had paid for his breakfast. At one, after having passed over a plain thickly covered with maguey, we came to an establishment for making *Vino Mescal*. This is an ardent spirit distilled from the heart of the maguey, which being deprived of its leaves to the very bottom of the root is well bruised and boiled; it is then placed in immense leather bags suspended from four large stakes, and allowed to ferment, with the addition of pulque and the branches of a shrub called "*Yerba Timba*" to assist the fermentation. These leather bags each hold about two tuns. The liquor when sufficiently prepared is baled from them to the still, which is inclosed in an immense staved and hooped vessel, like an overgrown cask, from whence the distilled spirit flows by a spout made of a maguey leaf. This stands over a subterraneous fire, and the cooling water is contained in a large copper basin, which fits into the top of the cask and is removable at pleasure. The "*Vino Mes-*

cal" is then stored in entire bullock's hides, of which we saw a room quite full, and their appearance resembled a quantity of cattle hung up by the hocks and deprived of the feet, head, and hair. Each of these would, I conceive, hold about two pipes, and they had a spout in the lower end formed from the skin of the neck. When struck by the open hand they gave forth a jingling sound as if containing glasses. The *Vino Mescal* is sent to the market in goat-skins, of which we saw some milk-white ones lying inflated in readiness; and not far from the house was a flock of many thousand goats of the purest white, with a quantity of brood mares and fine cattle. The conductor and some of the other people gave evidence of the strength of the commodity which they manufactured, for they were half-drunk, very smoky, and extremely dirty. But we were surprised in the midst of this scene by the apparition, from a little mud hut where the men resided, of a young girl of about thirteen, perfect in beauty and figure, and as fair as a European. At four we reached the Hacienda of El Espiritu Santo (The Holy Ghost).

These are startling appellations to an English ear, but in this most Catholic country they are quite common. At Tampico there is "The shop of the Deity;" in San Luis, "The Holy Trinity;" while "The Divinity," "Jesus Christ," and other sacred titles, are designations for drinking-houses and the meanest shops. The fields at the Hacienda were in the highest state of cultivation, surrounded by good walls; and here we saw the first field of wheat, quite ripe for the sickle. There are large ponds dammed up in the valley by "Presas," or walls, of excellent masonry, well plastered and white-washed; and the village of the Hacienda displayed a neatness and air of good management rarely to be seen in Mexico. The Hacienda abounds in fine cattle, horses, and mules. In the lagoon we saw numbers of ducks, and a white heron. The prosperity of this place is attributed to the owner having armed his people in defence of his property during the devastating revolutionary war; and its contrast with some Ranchos which we had passed on our day's ride was very striking. There we

saw the houses roofless and in ruins blackened by fire, and had ridden over plains still bearing faint traces of the plough; but the Rancheros who had tilled the ground had been murdered with their whole families during the war. In the space of forty miles we passed no fewer than fifteen crosses set up at the road-side, to mark the spot where an assassination had been committed, and to claim the traveller's prayers for the soul of the unfortunate victim. This part of the road was still considered unsafe; we therefore took the precaution not to separate from each other, and carried our arms in readiness. We lodged in a very good Meson, having its rooms on two sides of a large court, in which we found a convoy of 130,000 dollars on their way to the coast, guarded by half-a-dozen ill-looking ragged soldiers, with ineffective muskets, and horses which could scarcely support themselves*.

June 9.—We set out at seven over a dusty but excellent road, through the same barren unin-

* Our journey had been fourteen leagues.

teresting country, destitute of water, and bounded by distant mountains. Here the whirlwinds were very numerous and troublesome. In the course of our ride we saw several wild deer and some very small humming-birds. On this day we passed the cairns of three murdered persons; and having ridden ten leagues, arrived soon after noon at the Government salt-works and Hacienda of Las Salinas, where we obtained a room in the Meson of "Jesus of Nazareth." The Hacienda contains about five hundred persons, and is situated on an arid plain, near which are the marshes whence salt in an impure state is procured. This is consumed in great quantities at the "Haciendas de Plata*" of the mining establishments, where it is used in the process of amalgamation. There is a military establishment and barrack here, inclosed within extensive walls pierced with loop-holes for musketry, and surrounded by a ditch, of about ten feet in depth and as many in width, cut in the solid lime-

* The place where the ores are reduced, and the pure metal extracted.

stone. A hundred Royalist soldiers garrisoned this place during the wars; and it was never once taken by the insurgents, although there was much fighting on the plain. The houses here are built of sun-dried bricks, of a much whiter and better quality than any I had before seen.

Saturday (*June 10*).—Leaving Las Salinas at seven, we rode over the swamp, which was covered by a brittle crust, and examined some heaps of the salt collected for sale. They were of the second gathering, called “Saltierra,” and so blended with earth that their quality was only perceptible by the taste. This is sold at four reals the Fanega* (bushel), but “La Primera Flor” (the first efflorescence, or “Sal Blanca”) is from three to three and a half dollars the fanega. It is conveyed to the Hacienda at the Veta Grande in cars drawn by bullocks, generally at the rate of three reals the fanega. As the Salina extends three miles in length and one and a half in width, it is natural to suppose that the

* This is the same measure as is used in Spain, and is equal to 1·599 English bushels.

Government derive a considerable revenue from it,—the Hacienda of the Veta Grande of Zacatecas alone consuming in Saltillo and Sal Blanca to the amount of 35,000 bushels per annum, even in the present comparatively unproductive times. Our whole journey on this day was over an excellent, though dusty road, through a desert only enlivened by the numerous spiral whirlwinds which half-buried us at times beneath the cloud they created. At the distance of five miles we came to a cluster of the most miserable huts I ever met with, called El Pozo; few of them had any side walls, and merely consisted of a low sloping roof just high enough in the centre to allow of a person's standing upright. It is impossible to conceive how the inhabitants support themselves for some part of the year; all is desert around them, and the salinas only afford a few months employment. At three leagues from our outset we passed about twelve miles to the northward of a long Sierra, where the mining Real de los Angeles is situated, and on its left, at about thirty miles, is a sugar-

loaf Sierra de Altamira just discernible, on which is the Real de los Asientos de Ybarra, from whence the city of Aguas Calientes is only eight leagues. Still further on its left again, we saw a rugged white Sierra, containing the Reales of Chipinqui and de los Milagros. Riding about two leagues further, our people pointed out on the right hand the Real and church of Ramos; and at last on rising a small hill we saw the Cerro of Zacatecas, about forty miles to the westward. We now considered ourselves as having fairly entered on the mining district of Mexico; and a more desolate dreary country than this appeared in the month of June, scarcely exists on the face of the globe,—after excepting the great Desert in Africa, and the Polar Regions. We completed our day by arriving at a wretched mud village named La Blanca, and put up at a ruined Hacienda de Plata, having travelled twelve leagues, in which we saw five cairns and crosses. At about four miles before reaching this wretched place, we passed La Laguna y Rancho del Moro, lying at a little di-

stance to our left. Considerable quantities of salt covered the ground at this place, which a number of people were scraping up and putting into a bullock cart. The flat valley was covered by a weak kind of parched grass, on which above three hundred brood mares with their colts and a large flock of sheep were feeding. Here I saw for the first time a Coyote, or jackal, at which I had an ineffectual shot; and we also observed that the ground squirrels* were very numerous.

June 11.—Leaving La Blanca at eight, we proceeded over a country beyond all description gloomy and barren. At five leagues we passed a cluster of hovels called Franosa, a little on our left; and in five leagues more began a very gradual descent into a sterile valley of five or six miles in width, which brought us to the foot of the Cerro of Veta Grande. A gentleman from the Veta met me, and we rode up the rugged ravine amongst the mountains to the mine and village of La Veta Grande, which are situated nearly at its head, about

* “Ardilla”—“Tusa.”

five miles from the plain, or rather from the Hacienda de la Purissima Concepcion de Saucedo, where the ores from the mine are amalgamated. I had prepared myself to be as much disappointed with this place, after the description given me, as with almost every thing else I had seen since landing in the much vaunted Republic of Mexico; but found it ten times worse even than I could have anticipated. High steep hills covered with stones and the parched remains of last year's miserable allowance of grass, surrounded the Veta. Not a tree, and scarcely any thing which by a stretch of imagination might be conjured into a bush, was to be seen; and often have I travelled over a more productive and verdant soil, in the Polar Regions, than is to be found within some miles of the Veta Grande. The people, who are either employed in or connected with the mines, live in a little village along the side of a small Barranca; and the "Casa Grande," into which I was ushered, was filled at this time with a variety of people of every description,—all messing at one table, and sleeping two or

three in a room. It was still my fate never to have a whole apartment to myself, and want of accommodations again obliged me to have a fellow-lodger. I had consolation however for various discomforts and inconveniences, in finding Dr. Coulter, who was in charge of the Veta Grande until my arrival, a most agreeable, scientific, and gentleman-like man.

CHAPTER III.

Village of Veta Grande—Feast-day—Mine of San Bernabe—Zacatecas—Rains—Dislike of the Natives to the English—Village of the Saucedo—Colegio of Our Lady of Guadalupe—Christening—Ruins of a large Indian City now called Los Edificios—Ancient Causeways connected with it—Mal Paso—Chase of the Coyote or Jackal.

OUR residence at Veta Grande certainly possessed one charm—in the magnificence of its view. From our windows on clear days, and the air was generally very pure and transparent, we could look over the vast arid plains in the north to the remarkable mountains of Catorce, distant about two hundred miles: yet even this extensive *coup-d'œil*, when the novelty had ceased to charm, was but increasing the feeling of desolation; the eye in all that extent wandering over barren plains, scarcely enlivened by a single tree, and wholly destitute of water. To compensate for the dismal exterior of the Veta Grande, the mines

were promising well, and varying in their produce from five to ten thousand dollars weekly. Every process was still carried forward on the Mexican system, which with a few slight and gradual alterations was to be continued, after some abuses should be corrected, and the useless members weeded out of the community.

June 18.—On our first feast-day the village of Veta Grande appeared to have undergone some magical change, and to be peopled by a different race from those who had figured during the week. Fine shawls, brilliant-coloured gowns, silk stockings and white satin shoes, were flashing like so many meteors amongst the mud huts; and in the evening I accepted an invitation to go to an exhibition of Maroméros, or rope-dancers, in company with two maiden ladies, sisters of a certain Don Jesus, who kept a little shop, and was one of the principal gentlemen in the town. It was a fine moonlight night, and we walked to a small mud amphitheatre usually appropriated to cock-fights, where we found the tight rope stretched, and

a numerous party-coloured audience assembled. The theatre was open to the clear starry sky, and illuminated by four flaming piles of the Ocote or candle-wood, placed in iron cradles on the summits of tall poles. The whole scene was very novel and striking to me, as the miners and villagers lay extended and lounging on the earthen seats wrapped in their variously striped serapes; while five of the "milicia" moved about in the crowd to preserve order.

The ladies kept us plentifully supplied with cigars, which they also smoked abundantly; and in our turn we purchased sugar-plums and sweet cakes for them during the very short intervals of smoking.

The rope-dancing was tolerable, particularly by a very fat old woman gorgeously attired, who seemed in a terrible fright lest she should have a fall. A boy of about twelve years of age quite astonished us by his activity and the variety of his postures and contortions, which far exceeded any thing of the kind I had ever seen in Europe. The

tumblers were attended by a clown, who with a blackened face and much talking greatly delighted the company. The performances were closed by a "Comedia" in front of a ragged sheet.

June 21.—Captain Vetch, first-commissioner of the affairs of the Real del Monte and Bolaños Companies, arrived from the latter place, for the purpose of closing accounts with the lessees of the mines, and putting affairs in order.

June 22.—An accident which happened this morning in the mine of Gajuelos gives a good example of the force of prejudice amongst the natives. One of the miners, in descending by the very awkward ladder way, missed his footing, and in his fall carried another poor wretch to the bottom with him. He who first fell was instantaneously killed, and the other man died in two days after the accident. I went with Dr. Coulter to see the living sufferer drawn up the shaft in a net; but we were not permitted to examine his hurts, until the priest, who also attended, had confessed him; it being a law in this strange country, that if a man is found even

stabbed and bleeding in the street, no good Samaritan may venture to stop his wounds until the Alcalde has seen him and the Padre has taken his confession. Thus the law and the gospel, instead of saving, are often the means of destroying the life of an unfortunate being, who by timely assistance might have been snatched from death.

June 25.—The periodical rains, which had been anxiously expected for some time but had been kept back by a continuance of easterly winds, now set in with considerable force.

June 28.—On this day we rode into Zacatecas, which was my first visit there. The road to it lies over the summits of the high ridge of mountains, and is about as uninteresting a route as can well be imagined. Here and there the buildings and Malacates of various mines break to a certain extent the monotony of the prospect; and in a hollow to the eastward of the road lies the remarkable mine of San Bérnabe, still in work, and reputed to have been one of the first which was opened after the Conquest. The individual who

then possessed it soon acquired great wealth ; and although of obscure birth, married the daughter of the Viceroy, which gave rise to the following lines, since become a kind of standard saying amongst the miners of the neighbourhood:—

“ *Si la Mina San Bérnabe*
No daria tan buena Ley
No casaria Pedro Barra
Con la Hija del Virey.”

The first appearance of Zacatecas as the traveller approaches from the northward is peculiar and pleasing. The city stands in a deep basin at the foot of a picturesque and abrupt mountain, called the Bufo ; and the entrance by the suburbs is through a gravelly water-course, in which groups of women are seen washing clothes. We paid a visit of ceremony to his excellency general Lobato, some short time since a very respectable cobbler at Jalapa, and now commander in chief of the “ Free and Sovereign State * of Zacatecas.” He was un-

* Estado libre y soberano.

well and confined to his room ; but we were received by his lady, a thin talkative little woman, who abused both miners and mining in most unqualified terms ; and by her sister, a large, greasy, half-dressed maiden, with black moustachios and nut-brown teeth. The ladies sat huddled up in a corner smoking ; and the tiled floor, on which reposed an immense dog and her puppies, was strewn with extinguished cigars and their ashes, cabbage and lettuce leaves, and other filth which had fallen from five bird-cages hung along the centre of the room.

Two unshaven and unwashed cavaliers were paying their morning compliments to La Generala, and the whole scene was such, that I retired from it with no very favourable ideas of the *beau monde* at Zacatecas. Having made equally gratifying visits to one or two other of the most distinguished families, we rode home in the rain, which now fell regularly every day at about two or three o'clock in the afternoon.

From our great elevation above the extensive plains we were enabled to command most mag-

nificent views of the progress and formation of the clouds as they swept in large black masses, at an equal height, over the low grounds, and on reaching the mountains bounded as it were from summit to summit accumulating in their progress all the smaller vapours, and then with heavy thunder and vivid lightning breaking, and deluging for a few hours the whole country beneath. The outline of the storm was invariably so clearly defined, as it rushed towards us from the east, that while one half the heavens was blackened by the growing tempest, the western sky was of a bright and cloudless blue, and the plains glowing beneath the dazzling rays of the sun.

July 9.—On the 9th a party of English artificers and miners, under the charge of my friend Mr. Tindal, arrived from Real del Monte, and passed through Zacatecas at the time it was most crowded with people, who on Sundays flock from the neighbourhood to attend the market. On these occasions they generally get drunk, when they become quarrelsome and too frequently use their knives against each other. It was an

unlucky moment for strangers to appear amongst them, and they availed themselves of it to quarrel with the English and to throw stones at them;—had not a party of the city “milicia” been sent to protect the new comers on their way to the Veta Grande, some serious consequences might have ensued. The Custom-house officers having taken it into their half-tipsy heads that the baggage of the travellers contained some arms, stopped it all in the middle of the town, and Mr. Tindal and I were obliged to ride there to settle matters. By humouring the crowd, who were already ripe for mischief, we kept them in tolerably good temper; but no sooner were our backs turned, than we were saluted with a half merry half saucy hiss, and they honoured our retreat with a few stones.

Considerable ill-will was also manifested towards the strangers by the miners at the Veta; and when they appeared singly, they were pelted. An attack was actually made at night on the door of the house in which they were quartered, and it

was battered with stones. Four ringleaders of the assailants were taken up and imprisoned, and on the following morning a threatening paper which had been pasted on our stable gates and on the door of the Alcalde was brought to us.

July 10.—Captain Vetch addressed a very strong remonstrance to the authorities of the village, respecting the conduct of the natives; but on the succeeding morning similarly intolerant papers were again placarded in a kind of doggerel rhyme.

On the 12th I went to reside at the Hacienda de Saucedá, at which the silver is beneficiated *. This establishment is situated about five miles N. E. of the Veta Grande, at the beginning of the ascent from the plains. It was decided that this retired spot should be my head-quarters; and having discharged the native Administrador, who defrauded us of a considerable sum of money, I assumed his office and conducted the concern.

The little quiet village of the Saucedá, with the comparatively gentle manners of its inhabitants,

* Extracted from the ore.

were quite delightful after the bustle of the crowded Veta; and it was not one of my smallest gratifications, to enjoy for a whole week a room to myself. The eastern front of the gallery in which I lived looked into the "Patio" or large paved court, in which the silver ores are submitted to the process of amalgamation; and beyond its walls the eye could roam for twenty-five miles over a plain terminated by a low line of mountains, at whose foot a white church pointed out the situation of the Real or mining district of Ramos. The recent rains had achieved wonders in the rugged barrancas; many places having changed their brick-coloured hue for a lively green, while small bushes peeped here and there from the crevices of the rocks near the water-courses; the plains too looked fresher and more cheerful;—in fact, I had changed my residence from one of the most desolate spots which could be imagined, to a better situation, and all nature wore a more pleasing aspect in consequence.

Of our domestic affairs I may mention that the

first English child was born at the Veta Grande; and at the same time a little humming-bird died, which I had kept for nearly a month on sugar and water slightly impregnated with saffron. It greedily sucked this mixture from a small quill; and I am sure that with constant attention these little creatures might be kept for a long time.

July 15.—The first-commissioner left for Real del Monte, and a party of us accompanied him to the Colegio of Our Lady of Guadalupe, to which we had been invited. This convent is situated at the foot of the mountains about a league to the eastward of Zacatecas, and surrounded by a little village which has arisen on the sanctified spot. It has a very pleasing appearance, being embellished by about two dozen trees. The Fathers received us most kindly; and with the attentions of the Padre Guardián and Padre Maldono (Macdonald, an Irishman), we passed a very agreeable evening; were regaled with a good supper, and a separate cell with a clean bed was provided for each of us.

July 16.—Making an early tour of the convent,

we first visited its library, consisting chiefly of religious works bound in parchment, to the amount of 11,000 volumes. None of them were particularly remarkable either for type or age, and I inquired in vain for old Mexican MSS. or objects of antiquity; which, as this society of friars are all Missionaries, I expected they would have collected on their visits to the more remote districts and tribes in New Spain. The Colegio, which is large, is profusely ornamented with very ill-executed paintings, chiefly relating to the life of San Francisco, who in power and miracles very far exceeded the Saviour, the latter being actually represented attending him as a menial servant.

One picture particularly amused me, as the best specimen of the Fuseli school I ever saw. It represents the Jewish council debating upon the proposed seizure of our Saviour. They are a grave and venerable party, but each has, perched either on his head or shoulders, a devil, who is whispering his wicked thoughts.

All these imps, however, are painted with the

most laughably roguish snouts and eyes, and the oddest claws and tails imaginable; while the elders, perfectly unconscious of their strange associates, are very serious, communing with each other. The church and chapels have nothing remarkable, except one very highly esteemed show, where Joseph and Mary in gorgeous apparel are kneeling near a wilderness of gold tinsel wire; while around them are a confused variety of little images not a twentieth part of their size. Amongst the multitude is one female Chinese figure, with the usual dead white face and long eyes, and another Chinese woman bearing a child made of soapstone. The most grotesque, however, is a little drunken Dutch farmer in leather breeches and a red waistcoat, who is placed very properly in the foreground to prevent the scandal his company would throw on the other idols. One eye is open, and its fellow is closed, with an air of slyness and roguery which gives a most comical expression to his tipsy face. This is perhaps the first Dutch saint which has ever been worshiped in Mexico.

Nothing could be more refreshing than the extensive gardens, crowded with apple-, pear-, fig-, and quince-trees. There were also some vines, pomegranates, peaches, and apricots. Immense rose-hedges rendered the walks in many places shady and sweet, and the whole was well cultivated, —a kind of Oasis in fact, in the desert of Zacatecas. We were all much pleased with our visit, which gave great satisfaction to the Fathers, who were happy to entertain any one from the mines, whence they draw the chief part of their very uncertain revenue in return for confessions and masses, as well as by begging, according to the law of their order, from all the cottagers.

The poor friars of Guadalupe are a much-enduring race, and should not, I conceive, be classed with the herd of drones who batten so uselessly on the public in Mexico. These do actually endure all the poverty which their vow enjoins, and their whole life is devoted to voluntary suffering. They have no personal property beyond one coarse gray woollen dress, which is never changed until

worn into holes; and it then, having fully attained the odour of sanctity, sells for twenty or thirty dollars, as the burial garment of some devotee, who is supposed to smuggle himself into heaven in so holy an envelope. They wear neither shirt, stockings, nor any other articles of dress than a pair of sandals; and in the high cold mountains of the northern states, or low in the burning plains of the *Tierra Caliente*, no change of habit appropriate to the climate, is permitted by the rules of the order.

The *Colegio de Guadalupe* was founded expressly for the purpose of furnishing missionaries “*para conquistar*,” or for the conversion of the Indians of Texas, California, or indeed any barbarous northern tribes; and about half the friars of the establishment are constantly absent on these pious errands. A vast number of these poor men have perished from absolute want on their weary journeys, being sent forth without money or even an animal to carry them, and dependent on charity for their subsistence. Many also have

been barbarously sacrificed by the wild Indians:—yet the missions are constantly maintained, and with success; since in the most retired and inhospitable parts of the northern states, communities of some thousand Indians may be found living under the spiritual guidance of one or more of these poor friars; although the faith which is taught them is so modified from the Mexican religion, in order to suit their habits and capacities, that the name of “Christiano” is all of Christianity which they learn. Amongst a barbarous people the Missionaries, although themselves most grossly ignorant, appear gifted with almost supernatural acquirements, scarcely inferior to the Saints and Martyrs whose absurd legends they so strenuously inculcate. The Padres, who reside in their turns in the Colegio, undergo a life of perpetual mortification, with but little rest;—constant prayers with meagre diet. In addition to this, they retire at seven in the evening to a darkened room having only one small taper burning before a crucifix: here for one hour they flog themselves with a

small whip of twisted wires, called a *disciplina*, and sing the "Miserere" during the penance. I have in my possession one of these instruments of torture; and were every penitent to give himself but half a dozen good strokes with it, I should believe their assertion, "that the hall of contrition is sometimes covered with blood." A few of these poor enthusiasts may occasionally strike a good fair blow; but human nature is such, that I conceive honest Sancho Panza's hint for unseen flagellation is not thrown away upon the greater part of them.

After having undergone the discipline, at which it is said some of the poor wretches faint, the whole community, with downcast eyes, arms folded on their breasts, and in perfect silence, retire to their respective cells, where they may sleep or meditate until aroused at midnight to perform their religious exercises for the space of three hours. Novices are admitted to the order at sixteen years of age; at seventeen they may profess. Before the expiration of the first year, however,

they are permitted to retire ; an advantage of which they rarely avail themselves, the convent being so much revered in the neighbourhood that an admission to it is thought as honourable as retirement would be considered disgraceful. At twenty-four they may perform the sacrifice of the mass ; and at twenty-six hear confessions. The Padre guardián is elected every three years ; but his situation, far from being a desirable one, entails on him more labour and trouble than is imposed on his brethren. The poor recluses have but two enjoyments permitted to them. On Thursdays and Sundays they play at quoits for three hours, and on great festivals no discipline is required.

We returned to the Hacienda by the plains, now covered with bright young herbage, which appears with the rains and withers when they cease. A cloudless sky and glowing sun had called from their hiding-places innumerable little animals of the marmot tribe, called "Tusa." This pretty creature is somewhat smaller than an ermine, and is of a yellowish gray colour ; it burrows exten-

sively in the plains, and where large communities of them exist, the footing is dangerous for horses.

July 23.—This was a day of much bustle and confusion, in which we had a full opportunity of ascertaining the extent of the religious prejudices against us. The infant of one of our artificers, to whom I was to be godfather, was to be christened in the church of the Veta Grande; and as several English children had received that ceremony without opposition or comment in the city of Mexico, no impediments were expected here; the two ceremonies of the Catholic and Protestant churches being, with the exception of language, nearly the same. The day was passed in long letters and objections, which ended in an injunction that the heretical godfather was not to approach the baptismal font. It was late at night before all was settled, and our party proceeded to church; but as the other English were not permitted to be present at the ceremony, I of course retired with them; and the child's father, with a native servant whose knowledge of English condemned him also as a heretic, were turned

out with the rest. I walked indignantly home, and was soon followed by those who had waited in the sacristy, bringing the baby, which after all was not christened by the name that was intended, but by some fancy of the very reverend and most Christian Padre was called José Bonaventura, after which the intended name Jorge (George) was added.

My retreat very much discomposed the priest and his attendants, who imagined they should make a very good harvest of poor little José Bonaventura's christening. And while all the business was pending, and I was waiting in no very good humour the result of a discussion with which I was tired, the following most agreeable hints were supplied to me, as the intended godfather.

1st. The church would be splendidly illuminated in honour of the English, for which of course the Padre would expect an extra fee	<i>Dollars.</i> 12
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2ndly. The organist intended doing himself the honour of playing an anthem after the ceremony	4
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3rdly. The sacristan on so joyful an occasion could not possibly be presented with a smaller sum than	<i>Dollars.</i> 4
4thly. A notary, from a disinterested wish to render the ceremony as respectable as possible, would have the pleasure of being present to register it	4
5thly. Two little choristers would put on their red cloaks in honour of the event .	4
6thly. A scramble of medios (silver three-pences) were to be thrown by the delighted Padrino amongst the joyous crowd .	10
7thly. Medios spick-and-span new were, according to an old custom, to be presented to every acquaintance and decent person in the crowd*	10
	<hr/>
	Total . 48

To say nothing of the gifts which I was to make to the native godmothers; one of whom, the fat old housekeeper, rustling in black silks and smoking

* This gift is also usual at weddings, and is called "Bola."

like a furnace, I did make happy by the present of a Birmingham comb in the form of a tiara.

Had the young Christian been the child of a prince he could not have created a greater sensation; but as both father and godfather had been expelled the Catholic temple, no one was present to answer the demands after the baptism. The organ gave forth no joyous peal; the notary did not make his appearance; and although the sacristan and choristers remained in their full uniform, no one was found to reward them for their attention. At last, to the total discomfiture and astonishment of the Padre, the discovery was made that the babe was the son of a stone-mason, and that he would be paid accordingly!

July 29.—An intelligent Cura having given Mr. Tindal and myself some information respecting the ruins of an ancient Indian city about fourteen leagues to the southward of Zacatecas, on the road to Villa Nueva, we took advantage of a holiday and rode out to see them. Passing through Zacatecas, we travelled four hours in the first instance over

mountains, and latterly on an extensive plain devoted to pasturage, until we reached a small picturesque Rancho, called El Fuerte. Beyond this, at about one mile, we passed a massive and magnificent Presa (or dam), made to form a large tank of water. It extended about four hundred yards across a gentle valley, and was of excellent masonry, supported by immense buttresses, so as to resist the weight of water at its back, and which was a store for the supply of the beautiful Hacienda of Mal Paso, stretching some leagues to the southward. The plain we had ridden over was destitute of trees, but in the vale of the Hacienda they abounded, and were in rich foliage. Large herds of fat cattle and horses were grazing in the extensive pasture districts: all bespoke wealth and good management, and was the more striking to us after having lived amidst the barren hills of the Veta Grande. The country about here was thickly strewn with masses of gray porphyry, and chalcedony in nodules was very abundant.

Having ridden five leagues beyond Mal Paso,

we arrived at sunset at the N.W. corner of the isolated hill on which the ruins we were in search of were situated; and having examined a small artificial cave with two entrances scooped in the porphyritic rock, we rode on another league to the Hacienda La Quemada, where with great difficulty and much entreaty we procured a night's lodging in a hut.

July 30.—On the following morning we set out on our expedition to the Cerro de los Edificios, under the guidance of an old Ranchero, and soon arrived at the foot of the abrupt and steep rock on which the buildings are situated. Here we perceived two ruined heaps of stones flanking the entrance to a causeway ninety-three feet broad, commencing at about four hundred yards from the cliff.

A space of about six acres has been inclosed by a broad wall, of which the foundations are still visible, running first to the south and afterwards to the east. Off its south-western angle stands a high mass of stones which flanks the causeway. In outward

appearance it is of a pyramidal form, owing to the quantities of stones piled against it either by design or by its own ruin; but on closer examination its figure could be traced by the remains of solid walls to have been a square of thirty-one feet by the same height: the heap immediately opposite is lower and more scattered, but in all probability formerly resembled it. Hence the grand causeway runs to the N. E. until reaching the ascent to the cliff, which, as I have already observed, is about four hundred yards distant. Here again are found two masses of ruins, in which may be traced the same construction as that before described; and it is not improbable that these two towers guarded the inner entrance to the citadel. In the centre of the causeway, which is raised about a foot and has its rough paving uninjured, is a large heap of stones, as if the remains of some altar, round which we could trace, notwithstanding the accumulation of earth and vegetation, a paved border of flat slabs arranged in the figure of a six-rayed star.

We did not enter the city by the principal road,

but led our horses with some difficulty up the steep mass formed by the ruins of a defensive wall, inclosing a quadrangle 240 feet by 200, which to the east is still sheltered by a strong wall of unhewn stones eight feet in thickness and eighteen in height. A raised terrace of twenty feet in width passes round the northern and eastern sides of this space, and on its S.E. corner is yet standing a round pillar of rough stones, of the same height as the wall, and nineteen feet in circumference.

There appear to have been five other pillars on the east, and four on the northern terrace; and as the view of the plain which lies to the south and west is hence very extensive, I am inclined to believe that the square has always been open in these directions. Adjoining to this we entered by the eastern side to another quadrangle, entirely surrounded by perfect walls of the same height and thickness as the former one, and measuring 154 feet by 137. In this were yet standing fourteen very well constructed pillars, of equal dimensions with that in the adjoining inclosure, and arranged four in length

and three in breadth of the quadrangle, from which on every side they separated a space of twenty-three feet in width, probably the pavement of a portico of which they once supported the roof. In their construction, as well as that of all the walls which we saw, a common clay having straw mixed with it has been used, and is yet visible in those places which are sheltered from the rains. Rich grass was growing in the spacious court where Aztec monarchs may once have feasted; and our cattle were so delighted with it that we left them to graze while we walked about three hundred yards to the northward, over a very wide parapet, and reached a perfect, square, flat-topped pyramid of large unhewn stones. It was standing unattached to any other buildings, at the foot of the eastern brow of the mountain, which rises abruptly behind it. On the eastern face is a platform of twenty-eight feet in width, faced by a parapet wall of fifteen feet, and from the base of this extends a second platform with a parapet like the former, and 118 feet wide. These form the outer defensive boundary of the

mountain, which from its figure has materially favoured their construction. There is every reason to believe that this eastern face must have been of great importance. A slightly raised and paved causeway of about twenty-five feet descends across the valley in the direction of the rising sun, and being continued on the opposite side of a stream which flows through it, can be traced up the mountains at two miles distance, until it terminates at the base of an immense stone edifice, which probably may also have been a pyramid. Although a stream (Rio del Partido) runs meandering through the plain from the northward, about midway between the two elevated buildings, I can scarcely imagine that the causeway should have been formed for the purpose of bringing water to the city, which is far more easy of access in many other directions much nearer to the river, but must have been constructed for important purposes between the two places in question ; and it is not improbable, that it once formed the street between the frail huts of the poorer inhabitants. The base of the

large pyramid measured fifty feet, and I ascertained by ascending with a line that its height was precisely the same. Its flat top was covered with earth and a little vegetation; and our guide asserted, although he knew not whence he received the information, that it was once surmounted by a statue. Off the S. E. corner of this building and at about fifteen yards distant, is to be seen the edge of a circle of stones eight feet in diameter, inclosing, as far as we could judge on scraping away the soil, a bowl-shaped pit, in which the action of fire was still plainly observable; and the earth, from which we picked some broken pieces of pottery, was evidently darkened by an admixture of soot or ashes. At the distance of one hundred yards S. W. of the large pyramid is a small one, much injured and twelve feet square. This is situated on somewhat higher ground, in the steep part of the ascent to the mountain's brow. On its eastern face, which is towards the declivity, the height is eighteen feet; and apparently there have been steps by which to descend to a quadrangular space, ha-

ving a broad terrace round it, and extending east one hundred feet by a width of fifty. In the centre of this inclosure is another bowl-shaped pit, somewhat wider than the first. Hence we began our ascent to the upper works, over a well buttressed yet ruined wall, built to a certain extent, so as to derive advantage from the natural abruptness of the rock. Its height on the steepest side is twenty-one feet, and the width on the summit, which is level with an extensive platform, is the same. This is a double wall, one of ten feet having been first constructed and then covered with a very smooth kind of cement, after which the second has been built against it. The platform which faces to the south, and may to a certain extent be considered as a ledge from the cliff, is eighty-nine feet by seventy-two; and on its northern centre stand the ruins of a square building, having within it an open space of ten feet by eight, and of the same depth. In the middle of the quadrangle is to be seen a mound of stones eight feet in height. A little further on we entered by a broad opening

between two very perfect and massive walls, to a square of 150 feet. This space was surrounded on the south, east and west, by an elevated terrace of three feet by twelve in breadth, having in the centre of each side, steps, by which to descend to the square. Each terrace was backed by a wall of twenty feet by eight or nine. From the south are two broad entrances, and on the east is one of thirty feet, communicating with a perfect inclosed square of 200 feet, while on the west is one small opening, leading to an artificial cave or dungeon, of which I shall presently speak.

To the north, the square is bounded by the steep mountain; and in the centre of that side stands a pyramid with seven ledges or stages, which in many places are quite perfect. It is flat-topped, has four sides, and measures at the base thirty-eight by thirty-five feet, while in height it is nineteen. Immediately behind this, and on all that portion of the hill which presents itself to the square, are numerous tiers of seats, either broken in the rock or built of rough stones. In the centre

of the square, and due south of the pyramid, is a small four-sided building, seven feet by five in height. The summit is imperfect, but it has unquestionably been an altar; and from the whole character of the space in which it stands, the peculiar form of the pyramid, the surrounding terrace, and the seats or steps on the mountain, there can be little doubt that this has been the grand Hall of Sacrifice or Assembly, or perhaps both. Amongst the stones of the altar Mr. Tindal killed a blue-tailed lizard, which is rare, and one of the most beautiful little creatures of the species, and the bright ultramarine blue of the tail is not excelled by any artificial colour. In a curious old book* I found a description of this creature, with the account of a superstition which exactly corresponds with one existing in Africa with respect to the Ourral, a large kind of lizard.—“They are poysonous, and thirst after the blood of breeding women; and they report that if a woman, or but

* Lionel Wafer's Voyage to the Isthmus of America. A.D. 1677.

her clothes do touch this creature, she will afterwards prove barren."

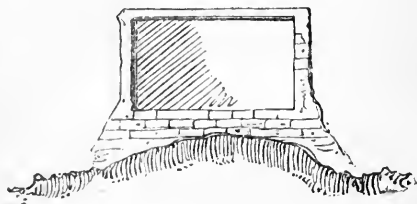
Passing to the westward, we next saw some narrow inclosed spaces, apparently portions of an aqueduct leading from some tanks on the summit of the mountain, and then were shown the mouth of the cave, or subterraneous passage, of which so many superstitious stories are yet told and believed. One of the principal objects of our expedition had been to enter this mysterious place, which none of the natives had ever ventured to do, and we came provided with torches for the purpose: unfortunately, however, the mouth had very recently fallen in, and we could merely see that it was a narrow well-built entrance, bearing in many places the remains of good smooth plastering. A large beam of cedar once supported the roof, but its removal by the country-people had caused the dilapidation which we now observed. Mr. Tindal, in knocking out some pieces of regularly burnt brick soon brought a ruin upon his head, but escaped without injury; and his accident caused a

thick cloud of yellow dust to fall, which on issuing from the cave assumed a bright appearance under the full glare of the sun;—an effect not lost upon the natives, who became more than ever persuaded that an immense treasure lay hidden in this mysterious place. The general opinion of those who remember when the excavation was clear is, that it is very deep, and from many circumstances there is a probability of its having been a place of confinement for victims. Its vicinity to the great hall in which there can be little doubt that the sanguinary rites of the Mexicans were once held, is one argument in favour of this supposition; but there is another equally forcible,—its immediate proximity to a cliff of about 150 feet, down which the bodies of victims may have been precipitated, as was the custom at the inhuman sacrifices of the Aztecs *. A road or causeway, to be noticed in another place, terminates at the foot of this preci-

* The writings of Clavigero, Solis, Bernal Diaz, and others, describe this mode of disposing of the bodies of those whose hearts had been torn out and offered to the Idol.

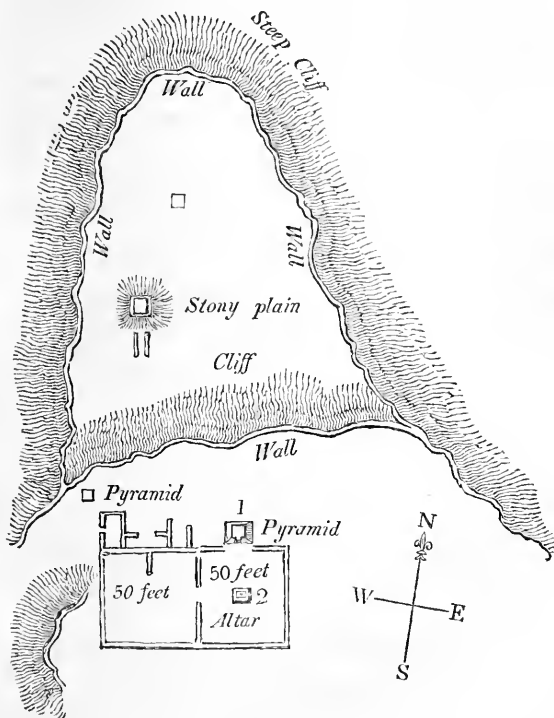
pice, exactly beneath the cave and overhanging rock; and conjecture can form no other idea of its intended utility, unless as being in some manner connected with the purposes of the dungeon.

Hence we ascended to a variety of buildings, all constructed with the same regard to strength, and inclosing spaces on far too large a scale for the abode of common people. On the extreme ridge of the mountain were several tolerably perfect tanks, one of which approached the brow of a precipice, and was admirably strengthened in that direction, as may be observed by the diagram.

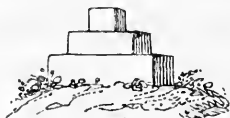


In a subsequent visit to this extraordinary place I saw some other buildings, which had at first escaped my notice. These were situated on the

summit of a rock terminating the ridge at about half a mile to the N.N.W. of the citadel. Their disposition may be better understood by the accompanying rough plan.



No. 1. is a building originally eighteen feet square, but having the addition of sloping walls to give it a pyramidal form. It is flat-topped, and on the centre of its southern face there have been steps by which to ascend to the summit. No. 2. is a square altar, of which the following is a sketch,



its height and base being each about sixteen feet. These buildings are surrounded at no great distance by a strong wall, and at a quarter of a mile to the northward advantage is taken of a precipice to construct another wall of twelve feet in width upon its brink. On a small flat space between this and the pyramid are the remains of an open square edifice, to the southward of which are two long mounds of stone, each extending about thirty feet; and to the N.E. is another ruin,

having large steps up its side. I should conceive the highest wall of the citadel to be three hundred feet above the plain, and the bare rock surmounts it by about thirty feet more.

The whole place in fact, from its isolated situation, the disposition of its defensive walls, and the favourable figure of the rock, must have been impregnable to Indians, and even European troops would have found great difficulty in ascending to those works, which I have ventured to name the Citadel. There is no doubt that the greater mass of the nation which once dwelt here, must have been established upon the plain beneath, since from the summit of the rock we could distinctly trace three straight and very extensive causeways, diverging from that over which we first passed. The most remarkable of these runs S.W. for two miles, is forty-six feet in width, and crossing the grand causeway is continued to the foot of the cliff, immediately beneath the cave which I have described. Its more distant extreme is terminated by a high and long artificial mound, im-

mediately beyond the river towards the Hacienda of La Quemada. We could trace the second S.S.W. to a small Rancho named Coyote, about four miles distant. And the third ran S.W. by S. still further, ceasing, as the country-people informed us, at some mountain six miles distant. All these roads had been slightly raised, were paved with rough stones still visible in many places above the grass, and were perfectly straight.

From the flatness of the fine plain over which they extended, I cannot conceive them to have been constructed as paths, since people who walked barefoot and used no animals of burthen, must naturally have preferred the smooth earthy footways, which presented themselves on every side, to these roughly paved ones. If this be allowed, it is not difficult to suppose that they were the centre of streets of huts, which, being in those times constructed of the same kind of frail materials as those of the present day, must long since have disappeared. Many places on the plain are thickly strewed with stones, which may once have

formed building materials for the town ; and there are extensive modern walls round the cattle-farms, which not improbably were constructed from the nearest streets. At all events, whatever end these causeways may have answered, the citadel itself still remains, and from its size and strength confirms the accounts given by Cortez, Bernal Diaz, and others of the conquerors, of the magnitude and extent of the Mexican edifices ; but which have been doubted by Robertson, De Pauw, and others. We observed also, in some sheltered places, the remains of good plaster, confirming the accounts above alluded to ; and there can be little doubt that the present rough, yet magnificent buildings, were once encased in cement and whitened, as ancient Mexico, the towns of Yucatan, Tabasco, and many other places are described to have been *.

The Cerro de los Edificios and the mountains of the surrounding range are all of a gray porphyry, easily fractured into slabs, and thus with

* See the Voyage of Juan de Grijalva, in 1518 : also Bernal Diaz, Cortez, Clavigero, and others.

comparatively little labour has furnished building-materials for the edifices which crown its summit. We saw no remnants of obsidian amongst the ruins or on the plain,—which is remarkable, as being the general substance of which the knives and arrow heads of the Mexicans were formed *; but a few pieces of a very compact porphyry were lying about, and some appeared to have been chipped to a rude form resembling arrow heads.

Not a trace of the ancient name of this interesting place, or of that of the nation which inhabited it, is now to be found amongst the people in the neighbourhood, who merely distinguish the isolated rock and buildings by one common name, *Los Edificios*. I had inquired of the best instructed people about these ruins; but all my

* It is not improbable, however, that this material was unknown to the nation who dwelt here, if, according to the Abbé Clavigero, this city was one of the earliest settlements of the Aztecs, before they established themselves in the valley of Mexico, near which (at Real del Monte principally) the obsidian is found in great abundance, although I believe that no traces of it are seen in the more northern provinces.

researches were unavailing, until I fortunately met with a note in the Abbé Clavigero's History of Mexico, which throws some light on the subject. "The situation of Chicomoztoc, where the Mexicans sojourned nine years, is not known; but it appears to be that place, twenty miles distant from Zacatecas, towards the south, where there are still some remains of an immense edifice, which according to the tradition of the Zacatecanos, the ancient inhabitants of that country, was the work of the Aztecs on their migration; and it certainly cannot be ascribed to any other people, the Zacatecanos themselves being so barbarous as neither to live in houses nor to know how to build them*."

* Clavigero, vol. i. book ii. p. 153.—Torquemada says that the capital city of the Chechemecas was called Amaquemacan. He says this place was 600 miles distant from where the city of Guadalajara now stands. Clavigero, who quotes this passage and comments upon it in a note, says, that "in more than one thousand two hundred miles of inhabited country beyond that city, there is not the least trace or memory of Amaquemacan."—May not the city I have described be the capital in question?

After having employed eight hours in our ramble, we rode homewards by another route, where wonders, which in the estimation of our guides threw the city into shade, awaited us. These were an immense block of porphyry, called "Piedra del Monarca," on which tradition reports that Montezuma (how he came so far from home does not appear) once reposed himself after some arduous toil. There is a natural or artificial indentation on the time-worn stone, somewhat resembling the print of a naked foot, which mark we were gravely informed had been caused by actual pressure; and although our dim sight could not trace the outline of a monstrous hand and fingers, corresponding but ill with the probable size of the monarch's foot, the people saw it very clearly, and took much pains to point it out to us.

In the evening we reached Mal Paso, and procured a room in its very miserable meson. This place, quite a little town of itself, is the property of a rich old gentleman of seventy, whom we saw sitting in his balcony, with his head bound up in

a dirty handkerchief, and attended by his wife, a young woman of twenty-five. A very pretty little church stands near the Casa Grande, and has six bells mounted on a coarse series of low stages in front of it. Under a portico or gallery we saw hanging the stuffed skins of five pumas or Mexican lions, of a light dun colour; four lion cubs; twelve gray wolves and two black ones, very much resembling dogs, and which probably were a cross between a wolf and a dog*. The lions had been taken in pitfalls, and it is customary to course the wolves and laso them when heavy and inactive after a plenteous meal.

Being anxious to obtain a sketch of this place, I sat down quietly with my book for that purpose, but was interrupted by loud cries of "Pleyto! Pleyto!" (a quarrel) which burst from the little street of herdsmen's huts. There I found three men with long knives, striking and stabbing each other most furiously, but they were soon sepa-

* In the house of Mr. Ward, chargé d'affaires in Mexico, I saw a dog and female wolf which had bred together once.

rated and led off to the Casa Grande, each wounded in different parts and covered with blood.

August 2.—Business obliged me to ride to the city on this day, to demand justice against a defaulter to the Company; and when the offender had confessed himself a rogue and bound himself to pay over the large sum of which he had robbed us, the judge, thief, plaintiff, and master of the house where the affair was canvassed, with some friends of the parties, sat down very quietly and sociably to dinner together!

August 4.—Having purchased 150 horses for the service of the mines, at twelve dollars (equal to 2*l.* 8*s.*) each, the process of casting, and branding them with the Fierro or distinguishing mark, took place on the following day, when I witnessed to perfection the whole process of the laso.

The animals having been driven into an inclosed space, it was quite extraordinary to see a small light man on foot engage in an operation which a novice would imagine must hurl him in an instant to the ground. On the contrary, the

animal he selects, rushes past him at full gallop; but the noose is no sooner thrown over its fore legs, than he fixes himself in a firm position, and so resists the sudden check of the laso, that the impetuous animal is brought with such tremendous force to the ground as frequently to turn over once or twice after his fall.

This active day brought me into acquaintance with our chief Ranchero, whom I commissioned to catch some coyotes, as the chase of these animals is one of the favourite amusements of the hardy Vaqueros, who display their skill in the laso and in horsemanship in taking them. When a chase is meditated on some holiday, an old horse is killed on the plains, and a herd of coyotes soon flock to feast upon him. They are watched attentively; and when any leave the carcase, which is only when they are replete, the active horsemen enter on the chase, in which they are very rarely baffled by the wily turnings of their victims. In form, colour, and habits, the coyote closely resembles the jackal of the Sahara of Africa.

August 8.—A serious accident occurred to a poor boy, who fell from a gallery, dislocating his wrists, and otherwise bruising himself very sadly. I found him surrounded by a crowd of people, who had nearly smothered him in the folds of serapes to the total exclusion of air, taking it for granted that his recovery was impossible. I bled him, and I set his arms; and in a few days my patient was able to get about again, to the great admiration of the villagers, who were divided as to whether the cure was to be attributed to my interference, or to that of San Juan Bautista, on whom the lad had called most vociferously while I was pulling his arms.—The saint, I believe, gained the day; but my fame was also established, and my door and path consequently were beset by patients; particularly rheumatic old women, on whom I effected wonders, by the unheard-of prescription of soap and water. I visited no patients who were not properly washed;—sick men now shaved off their beards, which operation they had hitherto believed would increase their disorder; and many a poor child's

head was deprived of that cake of black mud, which according to the belief of the Mexican mothers acts as a preventive to the baby "taking cold in its brains." No assurances of mine would convince the villagers that I was not a medical man, and all sorts of cases therefore came under my care. I thus obtained an influence at this retired spot, by which, in time, I might have introduced improvements in the houses and occupations of the natives, who some of them showed their gratitude for my attention to their requests by a morning present of a flower or a nosegay from their little gardens.

I really left the little village of La Sauceda with some feeling of regret, as there were many kind-hearted people there, whose character I was now beginning to understand, and which was so much more amiable than that of their Zacatecan neighbours. Two or three very worthy priests were in the habit of attending the chapel on particular days, and I conceive that to their good opinions of me, much of the civility which I received may be

attributed. I walked unarmed about the village at any hour, and never once met with an insult; and if I entered a hut, its inmates always appeared flattered by my visit. A crowd of people assembled to give me a very sincere "Adios" when I mounted my horse to leave them; and I look back to my two months residence among them with much satisfaction.

CHAPTER IV.

Account of the Mines and Miners of Zacatecas, and Operations of treating the Ores—City of Zacatecas—Population of the District.

THE interest which has been excited in England respecting the mines of Mexico, induces me to give a short account of those at which I have been resident at this place. It is to be observed that the operations here have been carried on upon the Mexican system, and without the introduction of English improvements which have been ably commenced in other places.

The chief mineral riches of Zacatecas lie in a cluster of high arid mountains extending about six miles to the northward of the city, and rising abruptly from the surrounding extensive plains. The Veta Grande is situated nearly in the centre, and from its superior size and great produce is now deservedly pre-eminent. Many small mines

are dispersed around this rich vein in all directions, and their workings have been, as with the Veta Grande itself, attended with more or less success, owing to a peculiarity attendant on the veins in this district. This is their tendency to lie in rich bunches, or Bonanzas, in the ordinary course of the lode; and mine holders who have been about to abandon their undertakings in despair, have not unfrequently struck on one of these unexpected nests of wealth, which have in a few months yielded to them princely fortunes. The family of Fagoaga, distinguished latterly by the Marquisate del Apartado, are amongst the most favoured of those who have been thus fortunate, and their great riches proceeded in a principal degree from the Veta Grande of Zacatecas. This has in several instances yielded enormously, and the returns from that portion distinguished under the names of Milanese, Urista, Macias and others in their turns, have been immense.

The Veta Grande has been worked for a vast number of years, yielding always, when not in

Bonanza, a poor but abundant ore, lying in a hard matrix of a quartzose nature, bounded by "walls" of very compact porphyry.

In width it varies from nine to sixteen fathoms, and although its extreme extent is somewhat beyond the possessions of the company, the portion in their hands runs nearly east and west to the length of 2500 varas.

The mines have been extensively worked, as from their produce and antiquity may very naturally be expected. Much however remains untouched; and when the vastness of the place is considered, I see no just reason why other Bonanzas may not, if boldly sought, be again discovered. The mines are deep, and, in consequence, somewhat wet, although they by no means bear the condemning title of "wet mines" as applied in Cornwall. The water is easy, and does not flow in any quantity or from springs, the deposit in the deep mines being rather from filtration than otherwise; increasing gradually after the rains, and in the dry season being easily kept. A great portion

of the present produce therefore, necessarily goes towards the expenses of drainage, by one great shaft of *Desague*, designated as the Tiro general. To the *planes* or bottom of this shaft is 396 varas; but the water is only kept to beneath the 300 vara level, leaving the old workings for the greater part drained, but preventing the sinking of shafts on discovery, unless increased drainage is applied. It is to be seriously lamented, that the great scarcity of wood in the immediate neighbourhood of Zacatecas precludes the use of a steam power, by which the *desague* or drainage might be easily effected, and a vast expense avoided. In the present state of things, it is requisite that four malacates or horse whims should, night and day, be employed constantly, to keep the water to its present level. There are, in fact, six of these machines, the two extra ones being merely employed on cases of emergency; and all stand under three united sheds of a great size, covered with wood shingles, and called *galéras*. For the service of each malacate, fifty horses are requisite, with relays

of drivers, men to attend the tackle, and receive and empty the water-skins or botas as they are raised to the surface*. The vast expenses attendant on this may be imagined; and could these be in any way immediately avoided, the sum expended on it would add greatly to the profits of the concern. A Socabon, or adit, would overcome very much of this difficulty; but it would take much time to complete this work, and objections might be made to so large an outlay as would be requisite for its accomplishment, although it is evident that its expense would be far less than two years' *desague* by the present process.

* The total number of horses thus employed, — the mules at the Veta, and those for the Arastres or Tahonas at the Hacienda, the asses which carry ore, and the horses employed to tread the Tortas, — exceeds 1200. It is in consequence of the fluctuation in the price of fodder for these animals, that no correct annual estimate can be made of their cost. A dry, or even too wet a season destroys the crops of maize; and grain which in one year may be procured for seven reales the fanega, can scarcely be obtained in the following, under twenty, thirty, or even more—so that in so large an establishment there may in some years be an increase of expense in this article alone, to the amount of 30,000 dollars.

The workings of the last possessors of the Veta Grande, previous to its delivery to the Bolaños company, were left in many instances in so choked a state, that ventilation was much impeded; and time and labour have been absolutely requisite to restore this important object, by clearing the levels, and in other ways putting things in order. A mine which has been carelessly worked, as far as air, order, and facility of access go, presents obstacles to those whose object it is to remedy these evils, which cannot be imagined by persons unacquainted with mining operations; and in the Veta Grande much was required in this way, and much has been accomplished.

Many of the dressing-floors situated near the mouths of the principal shafts were easily accessible to plunderers, from the inefficient state in which their walls were left—some had no walls at all. These are now properly inclosed; the dressing-floors are levelled and in better order, and much improvement is perceptible in the surface work of the mines.

The process of breaking, selecting and dividing the ores, as delivered immediately from the respective workings, is performed by men under the superintendence of native ore-dressers, who keep an account of the quantities received, their weight after selection, and of their delivery to the "Conductor," whose duty it is to carry the ores to the Hacienda of La Saucedá. For this purpose there are two hundred fine asses, which are each laden with two leather bags, containing together one carga, of three quintals, equal to 300 pounds. The bags are weighed at the Patio, or dressing-floor, registered, and an account is sent to the Hacienda, whence a receipt, on their being again weighed, is returned. The process of amalgamation, as practised with such success and superior expedition (compared with other mines) at the Saucedá, is most fully detailed, in every one of its stages, in a paper which I wrote after two months study of the subject, and which is in the Appendix.

The Hacienda, as before stated in my journal,

is about five miles to the N.E. of the Veta Grande, so near the foot of the mountains that laden wag-gons approach it with the greatest facility from the adjoining plains, and a command of water for the purposes of amalgamation can constantly be obtained by means of a *noria* or water-wheel.

The bars of silver are sent from the Hacienda to the Veta on the Saturday, thence on Monday they are forwarded to the Mint at Zacatecas, (which is unquestionably the most effective one in the Republic of Mexico;) and on Friday of the same week the coined dollars are returned to the Veta, so that they can be employed in the payment of the labourers and other expenses on the Saturday, only one week from the time of casting the silver into bars. The expenses incurred in the mint will also appear in the Appendix, showing the total cost of changing the metal into currency.

Here it may not be amiss to give some description of the Mexican, or perhaps more properly, the Zacatecan Miner. These people are not, as is generally supposed, Indians. I seldom saw a

pure Indian in a mine in this part of the country, but they are generally tinged in some degree with Indian blood, although I conceive that their affinity to the Whites is somewhat the nearest. They are in fact mostly Creoles, of a deep tawny hue, with jet black glossy hair, dark eyes, and a penetrating expression of countenance seldom met with in the Indian. In stature they are of the middle size, usually of a spare muscular habit, active and enduring in labour, and when sober, or not under the influence of the intolerant feelings which are in this district so visible towards foreigners, are a lively, somewhat tractable race. When inflamed by liquor, or their passions are excited, they are violent, bloody, and revengeful. In time, however, I conceive that their character will change very materially for the better; since I believe sincerely that, if unurged by some few bad and more intelligent spirits than themselves, they are capable of attachment, and have many good qualities. Their wages are high, and in consequence they are improvident; spirits, the universal passion for gam-

bling, and the extravagant dresses of the females of their family, unite to swallow up their well-earned wages, and the poverty incidental to their want of care and foresight is never attributed to the true cause. The mendicant friars also deprive them of a considerable portion of their pay; as on the settling days, large subscriptions are made at the pay table for the good of various religious establishments.

The climate at the mines is extremely healthy, the temperature mild in summer and somewhat cold in the winter, varying in each a few degrees from that of the Hacienda, where during the two months of July and August the thermometer ranged from 64° in the night, to 74° at mid day.

I am sorry that it is not in my power to say much in favour of the city of Zacatecas, which I believe was once the capital of a powerful nation, (the Zapotecas,) who were subjugated with great difficulty by the troops dispatched by Cortez for that purpose after the conquest of Mexico*. I ac-

* Vide Bernal Diaz.

knowledge a dislike to both the natives and the town, which I only entered five or six times on business; and I had no idle time on my hands, had I been disposed to make my visits more frequently. Thrice I so far succeeded in attracting public attention as to be hooted at as a Jew, and once had the honour of being pelted with stones. The frequent use of the knife is also a sufficient discouragement to a stranger's visiting the city. Murder is too slight a crime to merit punishment,—and during the month of May, twenty-one assassinations took place without a single person being brought to justice.

The town itself is good, but from the inequalities of the ground the streets are short, uneven and crooked. In some of these are foot pavements, and the place generally speaking is clean. The churches are large and very well built, and the Parroquia (the parish church) is certainly a noble edifice. Its front is superbly ornamented, and entirely covered with rich carving in stone; the architecture of the belfry is beautiful. Its font is one of the wonders

of Zacatecas, being entirely of silver, and weighing 3793 ounces. The execution however is greatly inferior to the material. "This baptismal font was presented on the 20th of November 1800, by Doña Maria Anna de la Campalos, countess of San Mateo Valparaiso, in remembrance of her having received the waters of holy baptism in this church, under the condition that if any other should present a better font, this shall be removed to the church of Sombrerete. The weight of this font is 474 marcos and one ounce." The above is engraved round the margin of this ornamental "Pila," which stands in a small room tawdrily painted in fresco, and bearing on its walls a variety of most extraordinary verses in a doggrel style, which I am not sufficiently skilful to translate.

The market of Zacatecas is tolerably supplied with fruit and vegetables, chiefly the produce of the Barrancas near Guadalajara; but the natives consume so little of the latter compared to Europeans, that the supply exhibited in the morning would appear insufficient for one of our small vil-

lages. The principal, and to us the most interesting building, is the Mint, which has recently been put in very excellent order at considerable expense, and is unquestionably the best of the five in the Republic. Three excellent dies can be kept constantly at work, and each averages, if strictly attended to, forty-seven dollars a minute; which, allowing eight working hours to the day, gives 22,560 dollars. The milling process is ingeniously arranged, and the casting is the only defective part of the establishment, which is able on receiving the bars of silver from the mines on the Monday, to deliver their amount in dollars by the Friday following,—a very great advantage to the proprietors; whereas in the Mint of the city of Mexico, a much longer period must elapse before the returns are made. La Casa del Ayuntamiento (or del Estado,) is really a magnificent building, perfectly clean and well ordered. Here all the public offices are established, and the sovereign congress of the state (Soberano Congreso) assemble.

There is no lack of friars of various denomina-

tions in Zacatecas, of which the Blue Franciscans are considered the most dissolute. Their respective convents are, as usual, the finest buildings in the place, and their influence, although somewhat on the decline, is still very extensive.

The governor resides in the city, as does also the general of the state, to whom I paid a visit. There are no troops in the town beyond the "Milicia," a circumstance on which the inhabitants pride themselves not a little; but which is to be deplored, as one reason for the state of disorder and anarchy which so frequently reigns; for in other towns where there are garrisons, better order is preserved.

No manufactures of any importance are carried on here, with the exception of a government establishment (Fabrica) for making cigars, of which the consumption in every part of the country is almost incredible.

Foreign merchandize is to be procured from several very good shops, but is expensive on account of the distance of its transport; and the only com-

merce of Zacatecas is with the neighbouring towns, of which, as the capital, it is the focus.

When viewed at a mile distance, either from the north or westward, Zacatecas has a most beautiful and imposing appearance, lying at the foot of an abrupt and picturesque porphyritic mountain, named the "Buffa," whose rugged summit is crowned by a neat church and a small fortress which was erected during the revolution. There is a narrow Alameda attached to the city, bordered by a row of young trees, the only ones which the natives have been at the trouble of planting, although very little care and expense would quickly clothe many parts of the mountain with timber, and remove that air of desolation and barrenness which surrounds "the mother of the mines." A quantity of small huts are scattered about near the city, of which the population, exclusive of these mining villages, is said to be 25,000; but this I consider as about double the truth. The country is healthy and the climate pure and agreeable, averaging during my residence, a general tempe-

rature between 64° and 74° , but being from its elevation very cold in the winter season. The sky is here usually very clear and brilliant, with the exception of the season of the periodical rains, and the natives live to an advanced age, if not of that class attached to the mines, among whom the free indulgence of spirits must tend considerably to shorten the period of existence.

The people of the mining districts have the character of being more lawless and unruly than those whose occupations are different; and whatever may be the truth of this imputation as regards other mining states, the Zacatecanos are somewhat worse than their neighbours. I do not however conceive that the mining interests of foreigners can now be materially or even slightly affected by the waywardness of the operatives. Mexico is a country newly awakened from a long dream of ignorance and oppression; and as much improvement is already observable to the residents in the country, more may naturally be anticipated, although its progress must, I conceive, be slower

in the state of Zacatecas than in the more central provinces, since the natives possess more bigotry and intolerance than their neighbours; and any improvements introduced by men of a different faith from themselves will for a period be received with distrust, and were at first exposed to insult. It will scarcely be believed that there should exist a people in a nominally civilized country, who yet believe in Lord Monboddlo's ingenious theory of tails,—yet so it is; that the English, or indeed all foreigners, being considered as Jews, are supposed to be ornamented by these appendages; and many people can be found who firmly believe that our stirrups being placed more forward on our saddles than is the custom of the country, is to allow of our stooping a little so as to prevent the friction of the saddle from inconveniencing the rider's tail.

It is to this bigotry that the circumstances of insults with which some of our people were received on their first arrival, are to be attributed. The prejudice of the people, influenced by the ignorant priesthood, induced them to look with jealousy

upon all foreigners as heretics. This prejudice is greater in these northern states than in the other parts of the Republic, and may be attributed in a great measure to the little intercourse they have had with Europeans, and will wear off gradually with the general improvement which this country must experience. In other parts of the Republic our countrymen have been well received.

CHAPTER V.

From Zacatecas to Bolaños—Villa Nueva—Native Tea—Warm Springs at Encarnacion—Manufacture of Cigarros—Colotlan—La Aguila—Town of Bolaños—Rope Dancers—Guichola Indians—Ball.

August 18.—H^AVING made the necessary arrangements in regard to my duties at this place, I now commenced my tour to Bolaños and the other establishments of the Real del Monte and Bolaños companies, previous to my return to England; leaving my friend Mr. Tindal, who for this purpose with great kindness agreed to postpone for a few months his return to England, to occupy my place, in charge of the Hacienda, while Dr. Coulter remained in management of the mines of the Veta Grande. I took leave of the Hacienda in the evening, and sleeping at the Veta, left it on the afternoon of the 19th of August. My party consisted, besides myself, of two native servants, two arrieros, some

laden mules, and a few spare saddle-horses, with which I was about to traverse between three and four hundred leagues, before my embarkation for Europe. We reached Mal Paso soon after dark, and thoroughly soaked by the rain, an inconvenience for which we could find no alleviation in the comfortless Meson.

August 20.—I set out for Villa Nueva, and on my way devoted half an hour to the examination of a portion of the Edificios, which had before escaped my notice. In riding slowly up the rugged side of the mountain, my horse suddenly made a full stop; and I saw immediately before him a large rattle-snake with open mouth which appeared disposed to dispute our passage. Wishing to obtain this reptile as a specimen, I was rather careful in killing him with stones, and therefore had a good opportunity of hearing his rattles to great advantage; ascertaining also that the story of three warnings could not in this instance be relied upon, since the rapid vibration of the tail continued unabated until the creature was killed. Its colour was much lighter

than that of those exhibited in England ; and although it had eight rattles, the length was only three feet eight inches. The fangs, however, were very large, and I dropped a dollar through its mouth with the greatest ease. It is generally believed by the natives that the bite of the rattle-snake is rarely fatal, and that a solution of nitric acid applied to the wound as a lotion is an effectual cure.

Passing through the Quemada, at the distance of eight leagues from Mal Paso, and fifteen from Zacatecas, we arrived at the pretty little town of Villa Nueva, where with all our live stock we became the guests of Don José Maria Marques, an old friend of our *Negociacion*.

Our ride from La Quemada had been over a smooth grassy plain, whence by a gentle descent we entered a narrow valley abounding in flourishing little gardens and plantations of maize, and passed into the town through a small grove of fresh-looking poplars, beneath which some lively and well-dressed groups of country-people were making merry.

In the evening a procession of some celebrated

Virgin moved through the town, preceded by fiddles, fifes and guitars, and followed by a prodigious number of women. All the people who did not join in the train stood at their house doors, and we knelt until the idol had passed. The whole ceremony was conducted with great solemnity until a loud screaming announced the arrival of an enraged cow, which dispersed the worshippers in all directions, and drew the attention of the young men from more serious subjects to their favourite amusement called Colear, which consists in trying to throw cattle by a peculiar manner of catching them by the tail,—an operation which soon drove the intruder bellowing down the street.

My hostess presented me for supper with a cup of native tea, which some stranger, whose name or nation I could not understand, had gathered on a Rancho, the property of Don José, and where he said the plant was to be found in great abundance. In the form of the leaves and flavour of the infusion it struck me that this was a species of the China tea-plant, and I advised Don José to make diligent search for so valuable and important a

production. I very much regretted my inability to visit the Rancho whence the tea had been gathered, as also to extend my trip about three leagues to the S. W., where is situated the Hacienda of Encarnacion, the property of the Marques del Xaral,—one of the richest proprietors in the Republic of Mexico, and celebrated for the superior breed of horses which he possesses on his estate.

Encarnacion is interesting, as having some warm springs of a most agreeable temperature for the bathing of invalids. The waters are said to contain nitre and lime in solution.

At about five leagues to the eastward are other baths, also warm, and strongly impregnated with sulphur. These belong to a Hacienda called “*Tepetistaque*,” through which also runs a stream abounding with a fish called *Bagre*, resembling the catfish of brackish rivers.

August 21.—The town of Villa Nueva is neatly built, possesses some good shops, and has a population, according to Don José, of 6000 souls. It

is one of the dépôts of tobacco, which under the new as well as the old regime is a strict government monopoly. While the mules were being saddled, Don José very obligingly accompanied me to the "Fabrica,"—a large well-arranged house, in which 400 men and 350 women are constantly employed in the manufacture of "Cigarros." This is the name given to those formed of cut tobacco enveloped in paper, while the term "Puros" is applied to the rolled tobacco leaf which in Europe is commonly called a cigar. Distinct portions of the house with separate entrances are appropriated to the sexes, who are distributed in long rooms having several rows of benches. Each labourer has a small basket with a certain weight of rasped tobacco, and sufficient papers ready cut to contain it when made into cigars; and when this proportion is disposed of, it is rigorously weighed and registered. From three to four reales is the average price of a day's labour, which commences at 5 A. M. and ends at the same hour in the afternoon. The expedition with which some of the most active

people rolled the cigars was quite extraordinary, and there are many who complete 4000 in a day. The product of the last four days and a half had been 121,309 "Cajas" or paper parcels, each containing thirty-two cigars, making a total of 3,881,888 ! the expenses of working which was 1115 dollars. The cajas are sent to the market packed in chests, each containing 4300. The distribution of labour at this establishment is very well arranged: from the makers the cigars are carried to the counting-room, where they are expeditiously made into cajas, and pasted in a paper bearing the stamped seal of government. The work-people are strictly examined, that they neither introduce liquor or weapons, and both sexes are searched nearly to the skin before retiring for the night, for which purpose female searchers, "Registradoras," are stationed at one door, and men at the other.

At eight I set out on my journey, but not until I had received a large lamb, roasted whole, from my hospitable friend, who assured me that I should otherwise fare very ill on the road. The morning

was delightfully fine, and we passed for about five miles over a plain thickly covered with young maize, amongst which the countrymen were turning up the furrows with small light ploughs drawn by two oxen, with their heads tied up very high to prevent their eating the fresh green blades. From hence we entered amongst the mountains, where for the remainder of the day our road was very bad. At seven leagues, having toiled up the Cerro de Membrillo, we descended that of Huacasco, by a road not easily forgotten, to a deep wild dell, in which we stopped for a time at the small Rancho de Huacasco. Here we ate Tortillas and drank whey in the house of a poor woman who had never in her life seen a foreigner, nor moved one league from the spot on which she was born. I gave her a fine brass ring as a souvenir of this visit, and having told her I was "Yngles," received with her thanks the assurance that she had never heard of such people.

In a ride of three leagues over the mountains, the road descended to a small fertile vale, rich in ma-

guey and maize, near the pretty little shady Rancho of Tenasco. Hence again entering on the mountains, we did not reach the village of Colotlan until long after night-fall, having occupied eleven hours and a half in riding fourteen leagues. The day having been very sultry, my animals were much fatigued; yet we could find neither food nor a resting-place for them, it having happened that a rope-dancer had recently arrived from Guadalajara, and all the Colotlan world who could muster three-pence had flocked to see his performance. Men and cattle, therefore, went supperless and comfortless to bed. The mountains amongst which we had this day travelled, were of red porphyry, coated in many places with chalcidony; and a peculiarity of form was observable throughout, or with very few exceptions. They were for the most part crowned by an abrupt naked ledge of rocks resembling a wall; above which was a space of perfectly level land, whereon trees were very rarely seen growing. The lower ground on the contrary was thickly clothed with stunted oaks, (amongst which I observed one spe-

cies resembling the *Quercus diversifolia*, mimosas, and tuna. The whole country was abundantly covered with fine grass, offering a most striking contrast to the brown arid deserts around Zacatecas. Amongst so much verdure I could not but observe the devastation which the numerous communities of ants had caused, by clearing the ground of every vegetable substance to the diameter of six to ten yards around their thickly-peopled mound, which was usually elevated about a foot above their circle of desolation.

August 22.—Being unable to procure food for my hungry cattle until late this morning, I was obliged to give up all idea of travelling further till the cargo mules had been refreshed. I therefore occupied the early part of the day in rambling by the banks, and bathing in the small turbid river which flows through the valley of Colotlan, and affords with its attendant gardens and fruit-trees some delightful scenery. Maize is here extensively cultivated, and the maguey grown in considerable quantities. Being lodged in the room of the

Ayuntamiento, or Town-hall, adjoining to the common gaol, my windows were constantly filled with gazers from the crowd, who in the Mexican villages are always to be seen assembled round the prison bars, where all the gossips concentrate, and all important village questions are discussed.

In the evening I received a visit from a very great man, the Gefe Politico, whose duties I could never clearly understand; but he brought with him a Licenciado, a Secretary, and a numerous unshaven train of attendants, with whom I had a long conversation upon the subject of the penal code of Xalisco*, which, as well as the trial by jury, my visitors informed me was copied from the laws of England. The criminal code of Zacatecas was spoken of with high contempt, as having no definite punishment for murder; while that of Xalisco was vaunted as a pattern to the Republic. I afterwards found that this was not exactly the case; that not a single law is ever put in force, and that

* The State of Guadalaxara.

the impunity of crime at the one place fully equals that of the other.

While we were debating on these important subjects, the sensitiveness of the chief authorities as to criminal matters was put to a sufficient test by a loud outcry from my neighbours in "durance vile," who were fighting with knives, and had wounded one of their number. This was an admirable foundation for a display of justice: but alas! cutting and maiming are not mentioned in the penal code; and the gaoler very jocosely made his report of the "Cuchillada," at which the authorities all laughed, and then continued their conversation. The most intelligent of my visitors was a pure Indian, proprietor of a Rancho, and of the Tlascalteco nation, who with some Chichimecos de Soyatitan and Tochopa Tepehuánes are established in the town and its neighbourhood.

Spanish is the only language now generally spoken by these people, although many still retain in their domestic circles the dialect of their ancestors. There are in Colotlan and its vicinity

(all of whom come in to the Sunday's mass) 7000 souls, governed by the Gefé Politico, an Alcalde (who is an Indian), an advocate, and two Alcaldes to the prison; from which strong hold I was several times accosted by a noisy fellow, with "I say, John English—ha ha! my boy!" which, unfortunately for further conversation, was my friend's whole stock of English.

August 23.—Our road, although mountainous, was good throughout the day, and maize fields were frequent. In five leagues we reached a retired shady village of a few huts named Cartagena, standing at the head of a small valley, through which runs a picturesque little river of the same name. Its course at this place was to the northward, where making a short turn it is said ultimately to connect itself with the river of Bolaños. We forded the stream, which at this time was little more than two feet in depth; but it is said to increase very much after heavy rains, when its course is impetuous, and serious accidents frequently occur in passing it. At these times passengers are

slid from bank to bank upon a rope, and animals are conducted across by dexterous swimmers, who are paid very highly for this service. Here I drank some excellent Pulque under the shade of a fine Mesquiti tree, from which station I could keep a watchful eye upon my cargoes, as well as admire the surrounding scenery,—the natives of Cartagena being celebrated for their ingenuity in depriving a mule of its load. We now immediately ascended to the higher land, where by the road side we passed two well-dressed but suspicious-looking men, seated amongst the bushes; and evidently, from their manner, on the look-out for ourselves or some other travellers. They followed us for some little distance, having their Serapes so disposed in folds about their persons that we could not see if they carried arms: but either disliking our number, or being disappointed in others who were to have joined them, they soon disappeared in the mountains. Passing several small Ranchos, we ultimately ascended a mountain clothed with three species of dwarf oaks, one resembling the

Ilex in its leaf; a second being gnarled and tortuous, and with leaves like our English species; the third was straight and slender in limbs and branches, averaging about twenty feet in height, but bearing leaves which were almost all from twelve to sixteen inches in length: specimens of these I have brought to England with me, one measuring nineteen, another twenty-one inches in length. I lamented that no acorns were at this season on the trees; but many of those of the last year lay on the ground, half-decayed and worm-eaten; they were not larger than our ordinary kinds in England. This species is, I conceive, a variety of the *Quercus macrophylla*, or Large-leaved Mexican oak, described by Louis Née* as having the leaves a foot long.

The mountains are of a compact white free-stone, much discoloured at the surface, and strewed in many places with pieces of porphyry and fragments of black lava. The pass is about three miles in length, after which, leaving a rude woody

* See Rees's Cyclopædia, article "Quercus."

gorge with high cliffs on our left, we descended between steep rugged rocks to a very smooth and verdant plain, in the centre of which are the little huts of Salitre*. In one of these I slept, and early on the following morning (August 24) set out for Bolaños. The plain was cultivated for a few miles with maize, now in a very forward state, amongst which I had two ineffectual shots at a distant deer, and having advanced nearer was about to take more certain aim, when a man galloped up to me at full speed, declaring that the creature was tame; and to exemplify this, he turned his horse's head, when the pretty animal followed him playfully at a rapid pace across the country. About four miles from our outset we entered the mountain passes, which are on a most magnificent and beautiful scale; and for several hours we continued winding amongst close thickets of the broad-leaved oak, and a species of mimosa, bearing a small yellow puff or flower which gave forth a most delicious fragrance. Late in the afternoon we reached the

* Fourteen leagues from Colotlan.

extreme crest of the mountains, and on rounding a little flowery bank a scene of indescribable grandeur presented itself. To the left is a dizzy cliff, La Aguila, 1500 feet in height; its summit dazzling beneath the rays of the sun, while its outline was finely marked by a dense mass of thunder-clouds in the distance behind it. A deep woody dell crossed from what then appeared to be its base, to a smaller but no less beautiful precipice which bounded the view to the right; and the dark border of this connecting wood was sharply drawn against a purple and distant range of mountains to the westward, fringed on their summits with towering pines, which stand at an elevation of 5000 feet above the Barranca of Bolaños.

Our road lay along the foot of La Aguila until we reached the crest of the mountain which hems in the woody dell, whence a glorious view of the valley or Barranca of Bolaños, at a depth of 2000 feet, burst suddenly upon the sight; its shining river running through the beautiful vale, and the Hacienda of Tepec just showing the tops of its

buildings from amidst the brilliant foliage in which it is embowered. We occupied nearly two hours in the difficult and steep descent, under the shade of a delightful wilderness of trees, of species quite new to my eye, and twining to the left. After arriving on level ground we soon reached the town of Bolaños, where in the excellent house of Mr. Auld, who was in charge of the concern, I found a most kind welcome.

Having never had the luxury of an entire room to myself since arriving in the interior, I seemed now to have entered a palace; indeed the whole of the slightly-peopled town bears every appearance of having once been of the first order: the ruins or half-finished remains of splendid churches and fine buildings of freestone were equal to anything I had hitherto met with. There was not a single mud hut or hovel in the place: all the dwellings were built of stone, in a superior manner; and the public edifices now untenanted, the ruins of immense Haciendas de Plata, and other establishments attached to the mines, all bespoke the

immense wealth and splendour which must once have reigned in this now quiet and retired spot.

August 25.—Mr. Auld accompanied me at an early hour, in a delightful morning, to visit the Leet Head, or that part of the river which is to be turned into the canal for the purpose of driving the water-wheels of the great mine of “Barranco.” This leet commences about four miles to the northward of the town of Bolaños, and the surrounding scenery is really superb: abrupt and dizzy precipices of freestone confine the valley to the eastward, and masses of picturesque hills are covered with verdant and flowery shrubberies; this being the spring-time of the Bolaños year, all nature looked so fresh and beautiful, that the sultry heat was almost forgotten amidst the bright young foliage, the gurgling of the river, and the sweetness of the air. It is during, or immediately after the periodical rains that vegetation appears to take a new impulse; and the face of nature undergoes a more striking change than is to be seen in climates where the showers occur at irregular

intervals throughout the year. In the "dry season" all the surrounding country appears burnt up and parched; no bright blade of grass or lively flower refreshes the eye, and the foliage of the trees appears, although green throughout all seasons, of a dull unrefreshing hue. I here took some sketches, though with a full sense of my inability to give more than a very faint idea of the country around me. In the evening, Mr. Price took me through a shady ride at the foot of the mountains to a little farm named "Comite," situated in a woody dell, not far from a delicious basin-shaped valley, which resembles some of those seen amidst the Alps, and has not unaptly been named "The Vale of Peace." The paths through which we rode resembled some of our ornamental coppices in England, and are continued for many miles along the depths of the Barranca.

August 26.—My morning was devoted to the examination of the workings upon the leet; and by descending eight of the ten lumbreros, or airshafts, I became enabled to judge of the very

great progress which had been made in this important undertaking.

As this was the pay day for the native labourers, the evening was in consequence devoted to merriment, which was quite a contrast to those Saturdays meetings which I had seen at Zacatecas.—A party of itinerant Maromeros (or rope-dancers) held their exhibition in the large walled yard of a once splendid mansion, to about eight hundred people; which was considered as a very “full house,” the receipts, at a medio (or three-pence) for each person, amounting to fifty dollars. The performance, which was exceedingly bad, was nevertheless highly applauded by the spectators, who were sitting or lying in a confused multitude on the bare ground; while some few persons of distinction had taken the precaution to provide themselves with chairs and stools. During the exhibition of the tight rope dancers, the spectators derived a continual fund of gratification from the Pallase or clown, who particularly delighted the most respectable inhabitants by the recital of a coarse

story. While a half-Indian was performing some clumsy evolutions on the rope, the band, in obedience to a signal, suddenly ceased; and the dancer having dropped himself into a sitting posture on the cord, pulled off his high embroidered cap, and very gravely thus bespoke us: “Caballeros y Señoras (Gentlemen and Ladies), I beg (*suplico*) that as I am about to throw a somerset, you will subscribe some money to be devoted to the service of celebrating the holy sacrament of the most Holy Mass.” All rose:—the men took off their hats with the utmost gravity;—a general silence prevailed for a moment; and the vaulter, who evidently was in great dismay, attempted to throw his promised caper. Unluckily, however, he failed, tumbled on his nose, and no money was subscribed for the “solemn and most holy sacrament,” forasmuch as the articles had not been fulfilled. To this succeeded fireworks, tumbling by two little boys, and performances on the slack rope; in which the unsuccessful vaulter astonished me by hanging with the rope at full swing and high above

the ground, by one hand, by his heels, his toes, the back of his neck, and lastly by his teeth. He concluded with a performance which is said to have been exhibited by order of Montezuma for the amusement of Cortez and his officers; and which I cannot better describe than in the words of the Abbé Clavigero, substituting however *boys* for *men*. "One man laid himself upon his back on the ground, and raising up his feet, took a beam upon them, or a piece of wood, which was thick, round, and about eight feet in length. He tossed it up to a certain height, and as it fell, he received and tossed it up again with his feet. Taking it afterwards between his feet, he turned it rapidly round; and what is more, he did so with two men" (boys) "sitting astride upon it, one upon each extremity of the beam." The feat, however, was in the present instance accompanied by a lively tune from the band, to which the performer kept excellent time, while he danced, with his feet elevated beneath the beam, a very neat and difficult figure throughout the exhibition.

While all these gaieties were going forward, two or three men constantly occupied themselves in picking their way through the crowd, and bawling lustily “sweetmeats and cakes for sale:” and one old fellow particularly pleased me, by his energetic yet conciliating appeals to the gallantry of the gentlemen present, to purchase a kind of “Pan dulce” which was squeezed into the semblance of pigs—“What! Caballeros! does no one buy my pigs for the ladies? What! no pigs for the señoras?” an appeal which had such effect upon the Bolaños beaux, that many a fair mouth soon blew forth its cloud of smoke, relinquished its cigar, and swallowed a “puerco.”

Our evening’s entertainments,—all for the price of three-pence,—were concluded by two comedies in front of three sheets, which performed the part of scenery. One was tolerably good, being a mutilation of Molière’s “*Mariage Forcé* :” the other, which was highly applauded, I will not describe. The spectators, although a parcel of Indians and half-casts, the greater part without shirts, would

have taught a lesson of quiet and good-breeding to our London audiences, much as we pride ourselves on our superior politeness and decorum; I never indeed saw so large a body of people more perfectly well-behaved, silent, and good-humoured.

August 27.—Sunday being the market-day at Bolaños, the little square in front of Mr. Auld's house was crowded with people at a very early hour; and about twenty of the Guichola Indians (of the same race as those seen by Captain Basil Hall at Tepic) were amongst the traders, selling a coarse kind of salt which they had brought from the shores of the Pacific. Each man carried his short unornamented bow in his hand, and a well stocked quiver of deer- or seal-skin at his back, while some also had two or three loose arrows stuck through their belt. These arrows are of light slender bamboo, generally fitted with a long point, of some hard wood, yet a few were headed by a thin small piece of copper. The dress of the Indians was principally of a coarse blue or brown woollen of their own manufacture, formed into a

short tunic, belted at the waist and hanging a little way down before and behind. Many had no other clothing of any kind ; but the breeches of the few who wore them, were of ill-dressed deer- or goat-skin, deprived of hair, and not even descending to the knee. At their lower edges are strung a quantity of slender leather thongs, which are said to contain an inventory of their goods and chattels, including wife and children. After some hours fruitless endeavours to purchase a pair of these singular articles, I at length succeeded in obtaining a very ragged and greasy pair, with which the owner parted most reluctantly, as they bore the register of his cows, and bulls, and calves. For my own part I could perceive but little difference in the appearance of these thongs, except some irregularities of length ; but there seems no doubt as to the fact of the Guicholas keeping an account of their property in this peculiar manner : Captain Hall received the same account of the knots of these inventorial breeches. The men wore round the waist or over their shoul-

ders several large woollen bags, woven into neat and very ornamental patterns, and in which they carried their food, money, or purchases at the market. All the married men wore straw hats of a very peculiar form, with wide turned-up rims and high pointed crowns, which near their tops are bound round with a narrow garter-shaped band of prettily woven woollen, of various colours and having long pendent tassels. These people cherished a profusion of bushy black hair, in many cases confined tightly round the crown of the head by a band similar to that which encircled the hat; and almost every man wore an enormous pigtail, bound up in other bands, having large heavy-looking tassels, which generally descended below the waist.

I was informed that no unmarried man or woman may wear a hat, or bind the fillet round the head; and as we saw some young people who had neither of these ornaments, it may, in all probability be the case. There were two young married females of the party, each wearing a hat similar to those of the men; and one of them had her head

ornamented with a scarlet band. Two of the men and one woman came into the house that I might sketch them. They scarcely understood even a word of Spanish, but fully comprehended what I wanted, and were very quiet and good-natured. The girl wore an immense roll of white beads round her neck, and from each ear a long bunch, from which was suspended the half of a little cockle-shell. Her shoulders and body were covered by a rough coarse cloak of brown woollen, without sleeves, having merely a hole through which the head was put; and she wore also a petticoat of the same material, barely reaching below the knee:—she was, as were her countrymen, barefooted; and I observed that the great-toes of all these people were much more separated from the others than is the case with Europeans. In complexion, feature, hair and eyes, I could trace a very great resemblance between these Indians and the Esquimaux, who are, however, somewhat shorter and more corpulent. They are said to be a very peaceable inoffensive race when sober, but quite out-

rageous in their drunken fits, when their quarrels are very bloody. Their marriages are curiously conducted : since it is the custom for a man to take his intended wife on trial ; and if, after an indefinite time, he likes her, they are then married by a priest or friar, who once a year goes round to perform this ceremony, and to christen perhaps the offspring of half the newly married couples. Should the lady not give satisfaction, she may be returned to her parents, even if pregnant ; and women who have been thus discarded, are as frequently taken again on trial, and ultimately married, as any others.

The Indians were not the only novelties I met with on this day ; for I was made acquainted with a most extraordinary man named by the natives “ Don Justo,” and who, for some unknown reason, has not worn clothing or slept under a roof for many years. Round his waist he was girded by a kind of kilt, composed of many hundred little strips of rags strung and matted into a thick mass. From his left shoulder, and crossing to his

right side he bore, in the manner of a knight's ribbon, an infinite number of little coils and bunches of small rope and twine tied and twisted together, and round his ankles were hung quantities of little straps and pieces of leather, in such a manner as to cover his feet entirely beneath two bunches resembling mops. The rest of his person was completely naked. This singular man possessed an intelligent physiognomy, was quiet and unobtrusive in his manners, perfectly rational in conversation, and never begged, although he would receive, in charity, whatever his few wants required. The general idea respecting his continuance in this miserable state is, that in consequence of some disappointment in love he had bound himself by a vow to his present wretched life. I made a sketch of him, which in point of novelty and peculiarity may vie with the portraits of any of the worthies in the "Wonderful Magazine."

August 28.—My day was again employed in the underground examination of the mines; and in the

evening I was invited to a ball, for which a party of ladies were assembled in a line of battle at one end of the room, and keeping up a constant fire with great seriousness and precision. The rope-dancers were of the party, and performed the "Xarabe," a kind of fandango, of which the natives are passionately fond. It consists of variously timed shuffling with the feet, the knees being bent, the body perfectly erect, and the hands dangling by the sides, as with sailors in a hornpipe. The dance, or rather the very dull music, is interrupted at intervals by a monotonous chaunt from the dancing woman, or a volunteer from the company, whose chief merit as a singer appears to consist in the excessive shrillness of the tones which she produces through her nose,—a musical peculiarity distinguished by the name of "Gaugoso." All the singing, in fact, amongst the lower orders in Mexico is strictly nasal; and even duets and trios by ladies of the middle classes are not in parts, or variously modulated tones, but all the performers sing at once, as loud as they can, in the same

twanging disagreeable voice, which is considered as very fine.

There was some bad dancing, by really a very nice-looking set of young women,—without stays of course, but very neatly clothed. Great decorum was maintained throughout the evening; and one end of the room was crowded by Leperos in their blankets, who very quietly squatted down to see the ball. The clown of the Maromeros, a well-looking man now that the black paint had been washed from his face, was much pressed to join the company; but the poor fellow modestly stood at the door, and ruefully shaking the sleeve of his clean but ragged shirt, declared himself unfit for such good society; although some muleteers and one of the servants were figuring away at a great rate. Some of the matrons, much to their credit, had brought their tender charges with them; and at intervals between the dances all the duties of nursing were performed, and the babies again deposited to sleep in the various corners of the room.

August 29.—This morning I visited the celebrated mine of “Barranco,” and saw such of the old workings as are still clear. At this period nothing was to be brought away as a remembrance of this place, but half-a-dozen bats, of which immense flights now occupied the shafts and levels whence millions of money had once been extracted. In the evening I forded the river on horseback, to sketch the fine extensive ruins of the surface works of this great concern, which from their superior masonry and regularity of structure must have once resembled an immense fortress.

August 30.—I devoted my forenoon to visiting a very fine unwrought vein of rich copper ore, situated at the northern extreme of the Cañon of Bolaños, at an elevation of about 600 feet on a steep mountain near the Leet-head. In the narrow Barranca at the foot of this place the Mescal plant is extensively cultivated. Bananas and oranges abound, and the shingle roof of a small hut, in which the Vino Mescal is distilled, was just visible amongst the beautiful wilderness of the place.

CHAPTER VI.

Mines of Bolaños—Woods—Leet or Canal—Former expense of draining the Barranco Mine—Town of Bolaños—Animals, Fruits and Vegetables—Native Indians—Guicholas.

THE mines of Bolaños, now the object of such important speculations, and whence such valuable fruits may rationally and confidently be anticipated, are situated along the eastern level of a deep Barranca, at the foot of precipitous cliffs which hem it in on that quarter. The shafts and levels rarely occur at a perpendicular height of above fifty fathoms up the steep mountain's side, and the buildings of the *Grass-works* lie almost hidden amongst close thickets and delightful scenery. The veins for the greater part are in porphyry, intersected by strata of crumbling steatite, or soapstone, of a variety of colours—red, gray, black, green, brown, yellow, mottled, and a very pure white. It is owing to this “soft ground” that many of the old workings have suffered conside-

rably. Removed from the mineral veins are beds of a fine white freestone, admirably fitted for architectural purposes; and the towering "Aguila" and "Bufa," with other cliffs, which in some instances rise 1500 feet above the wooded slopes of 1000 more, are also of the same material, having for the most part their strata dipping 45° to the north. Limestone is found at no great distance to the south, and the soil in all parts is rich and abundantly productive, but ill-cultivated, and hitherto poorly watered. I did not observe that in any instance the river had been employed for the purpose of irrigation.

At about seven miles to the westward of Bolaños is a ridge of rugged mountains, clothed to their summit with fine firs. Their height above the river was ascertained by Captain Vetch to be 5000 feet; and I conceive that they are a part of the range which the Baron de Humboldt designates as the "Sierra Madre." Rich as they are in large timber, it is rendered almost useless, as the mountain roads are so precipitous and bad

that it is almost impossible to transport spars of any magnitude along them. The present supplies of wood requisite for heavy machinery are therefore procured from a distance of ten or twelve leagues; but for ordinary purposes, the wood around the mines would be inexhaustible, with a hundred times the probable demand. The immediate valley and steep slope from the foot of the eastern cliffs runs north and south for about four miles, without a turn of any importance; and the general course of the metallic veins is N.N.E. and S.S.W., slightly deviating occasionally to the east or westward.

The whole of the mines in the Barranca of Bolaños are for a series of years the property of the English Company of that name, although the owners and lessors are various. The line to which the mineral riches are confined is divided for greater facility of accounts into three portions:

1. Northern Bando.
2. Entermidio.
3. Southern Bando.

The Northern Bando consists of three distinct *sets*, which are named Concepcion, Tepec, and Camichin: of these the mine of Concepcion is the most northerly, having its principal shaft, which is a considerable way up the woody hill, cleared to the depth of forty-six varas *. I entered this mine by a good socabon, (driven through a very compact porphyry,) which, with a cross cut on the lode, had been since the period of the former workings entirely choked with attle, but has now been completely cleared; and hands are driving on an old working, to cut the lode, which, with a dip to the N.W., runs N. 60° E., and is from three to six feet in size. At this period I saw but little promise in the ores.

The temperature of the mine was 93° , while the outer air was 83° . Tepec contains the old and new shafts of Santa Fé, with those of Santa Cruz and San Cayetano.

I visited the workings of *New* Santa Fé, those of

* At the depth of thirty varas it has been floored, and a cross cut has been commenced, south, to the lode.

the *Old* being higher up the mountain, and quite choked, descending by a shaft of thirty fathoms, very soundly timbered, and entered a new cut of 122 feet, which has reached the lode, above the back of which an upward rising has been made at an angle of 45° , to try for the old workings. This cut is through a soft soap-stone stratum, while the lode beneath is hard and difficult, and rendered more so till the communication with the old workings is completed, by the extreme closeness and want of air in the mine. There can be little doubt that this upward cut will soon reach the old workings, when there is every reason to expect good fruits; since, were ventilation once obtained, the base of the cutting is the lode itself, and can be worked at pleasure.

From the extreme closeness of the air (96°) an extra sum is paid to the Barrateros. It is fortunate that the nature of the present cuttings is such as not to require the process of blasting,—an operation which could scarcely be performed in so confined and exhausting an atmosphere.

The next mine on the set is Santa Cruz, which has not been deemed worthy of trial. To this succeeds San Cayetano, to which I descended by an old shaft which has lately been cleared and timbered to the depth of twenty fathoms. The workings in this mine were formerly very extensive; and the miners have recently arrived at large arches of old *labores*, very rich in lead, with good indications of silver, among which I found some of that kind called Petanque. The old works have been very irregularly driven, so that much of the lode, which varies from eight feet to eighteen inches in width, has been left untouched. The ground is very hard, but there is every reason to expect good returns when proper trials are made for discovery. The chief part of the lead is large-grained, and of that kind called *potter's lead*, which is unproductive of silver; but there is also ore of a finer grain, which promises well. Abundance of each kind may be procured.

This mine bears an excellent character; and as it is very shallow, I should conceive that much

virgin ground may be advantageously explored, since the mine, in common with all in Tepec, is quite dry, and no adit has been either cut or required.

Camichin consists merely of a mine and socabon of the same name. Much of the old workings have been cleared out; but the works are stopped for the present.

The socabon is excellent, driven through porphyry; but all the workings from it appear likely to be unproductive, since the extreme hardness of the rock would render trials for discoveries difficult and expensive. Here the temperature was only 76°, while the outer air was 89°.

The Intermedio contains the Carolina, Socabon de los Negros, and the shafts of San Juan (new), and America.

I first entered by the Socabon de los Negros, the mouth of which being ill-contrived has been remedied by a small under cut, with a clack-door, as the river has sometimes risen in the rainy season so as to enter the adit. The present entrance is therefore to be stopped, and communication is to be

effected higher up the hill. A cross cut of eighteen fathoms has been completed to San Juan's, or Taylor's new shaft, which has been sunk to the depth of forty varas, and is the only one over which a Cornish whim has been erected. Men were at this time working here on a new level, running S. 9° W., in very hard ground, containing a narrow lode of lead and silver, neither of which were very productive. Another set were also driving, N. 20° E., in hard ground, and had not reached the lode. In the first working the temperature was 90° ; in the second, 92° . The former *labor* has been extensive, and the lode has in many places been entirely cut away.

Carolina has been in work, but is at present stopped. Four fathoms of new ground have been opened, and abundance of potter's lead, two feet wide, can be easily attained. The temperature was here 94° , although no workmen were under-ground.

America shaft, which was entirely choked, has been cleared down to water; but as yet, nothing of interest has been discovered.

The whole of the mines of the Northern Bando are dry, shallow, and comparatively but little worked. Santa Fé and San Cayetano promise to become productive when active workings shall be commenced upon them. The other mines in certain spots also look well. The ruin of these places has been very great; but I could not have believed it possible that so much of the old workings should so speedily have been cleared. Very extensive timbering has been accomplished, and new levels have been driven,—to the great credit of the officers in direction of the *Negociacion*.

The Southern Bando has two *sets*, Barranco and Laureles. I entered only the former celebrated mine, by its magnificent socabon, which runs a considerable way in before it branches off to the Guadalupe shaft and to that of San Diego; both of which are clear to the adit level, but choked beneath.

There is little to be seen beyond this, owing to the ruined state of the mine, which at this part, being above the level of the river, is perfectly dry.

Traces of the rich vein were distinctly visible. Above-ground, some distance up the steep brow of the hill, are the immense and magnificent remains of the great Hacienda, built of freestone, and having the inclosures and pillars for the numerous malacates which were once employed, still standing.

Their labours were all devoted to draining the great Guadalupe shaft, which is still open to the depth of thirty fathoms, and has now no timber remaining. San Diego has been a very fine shaft. Zapopa is filled up; but that of San Vicente is good at the mouth, and open to some depth.

The Cocina shaft, where it is intended to place a water-wheel, has been cleared to eight fathoms, and is situated on the low ground between the Hacienda del Barranco and the town of Bolaños, which lies to the northward.

I did not visit Laureles, which lies south of the Barranco mine, and has been worked to the depth of forty varas. It has the shaft of Renovales, which is now so choked up that little or no communica-

tion can be had with the former workings. The river, which runs hence to the southward and joins the Rio Grande or San Cristobal, was fordable at the time of my visit, rushing over a somewhat rugged and stony bed ; but its present appearance will be materially altered when its waters are turned to the great object to which all the extensive works are now so rapidly advancing. It is the plan of the Company to bring the stream by a capacious Tarjéa or leet* to a large water-wheel which will be erected at the shaft of Cocina, whence flat rods will be carried up a small hill, and applied to the purpose of pumping the water from the celebrated mine of Barranco by the Guadalupe shaft. To accomplish this important object, 6740 varas of ground of various descriptions was to be opened. In some instances, drivage through very hard rock has been effected ; and in others, either through freestone or in open cuttings. At the time of my visit, half of this great work had been accomplished ; and in twelve months, if suffi-

* Canal.

cient outlay be afforded, the whole leet may be completed to its intended termination. The economy now so necessarily adopted, in consequence of the recent distresses in England, has materially checked the progress of the operations at Bolaños, where a boldness of outlay is of all places the most to be recommended.

At the period of my visit, much anxiety was felt as to the building up and securing the soft open cuttings of the leet, no clay proper for bricks having been discovered; but very shortly subsequent to my departure this very necessary material was found, and abundance of very good bricks have been made. The walls can now speedily be carried up, while the underground drivage is at the same time advancing.

The ores, which in small and rather unproductive quantities had been taken from the various workings, were deposited in a large walled yard attached to the Hacienda of Tepec. Shops and stores for the mechanics, with substantial residences and offices for the mining captains, were

nearly completed, on a central eminence; and the whole establishment had already assumed an appearance creditable to English skill and activity.

The chief attention and labour of the agents of the Company continue to be directed to the grand and important task of bringing on the leet: the whole expense of which will certainly fall short of two years' expenditure in the former unsuccessful attempts to drain the great Barranco mine by malacates,—an operation which was persevered in with such ardour, as to give the strongest proof of the riches which are known to exist in the mine.

The following is a translation of a very curious list of the expenses incurred by the last adventurers*, and will show the great importance of the Barranco mine.

* From an old paper addressed to the mine-holders in 1795, submitting to them at the same time a plan of economy which was not then followed. The document is valuable, as showing the exact amount of the drainage alone, without the salaries of superior officers, or expenses incidental to the mines themselves.

“ Expenses of the Desague (drainage), on the method which has hitherto been observed.

“ To maintain the mine that the water does not rise to above two Cañones (levels) above the Planes (bottoms) of the Barranco, forty-four Malacates (horse whims) have been considered requisite ; for which the following expenses were annually required:

“ For this purpose, 2,200 mules, fifty to each malacate, have been necessary. For their subsistence one year with another, with alterations and diminutions in the prices of maize and forage at two reals <i>per diem</i> for each animal, the annual expense is	<i>Dollars.</i> 200,750
“ 176 Drivers by day and night, at one dollar each	64,240
“ 88 Assistants by ditto, at five reals each	20,075
“ 10 Watchmen in the five ‘ tiros de desague’ (shafts at which the water is drawn), at eight dollars a week each . . .	4,160

“ 88 Boteros (fillers of the water-bags), night and day, at one dollar each . . .	<i>Dollars.</i> 32,120
“ 6 Señeros (those who make signals to hoist lower, &c.), at one dollar each . . .	2,190
“ 16 Desaguaderos (who receive and empty the water-skins), on a weekly salary amounting to	8,320
“ It is ascertained that each Calabrote (whim rope) lasts one month, one with another; these are each composed of forty-five Sogas (small lines), which cost eight reales and a half the dozen. The total cost is	25,202
“ To repair the whim ropes, &c., mend and make reins for mules, and for casual- ties which occur to each malacate, fifty dozen Sogas are required weekly in the five Tiros (shafts)	2,762
“ For water-bags (Botas), and mending those which break, 120 Vaquetas (cow- hides) are required <i>per mensem</i> ; these,	

one with the other, cost four dollars. In	<i>Dollars.</i>
a year	5,760

“To the above are to be added the expenses of houses, machinery, soap to ease the friction of the working pieces, traces, whips, water-skins, &c., malacates, repair of sheds over them, mules which die, salary of the mule-keepers, Ocote (candle-wood) to light the works, with many smaller expenses which cannot be enumerated; for this, fourteen dollars is allowed for each malacate weekly. Making a total annual amount of . . . 32,032

Total expense of drainage (Desague) . 397,612”

The town of Bolaños, which according to Captain Vetch is at an elevation of 3101 feet above the sea, now contains about a thousand souls, having nearly doubled its population since the *Habilitacion* of the mines by the English; but in its days of greatness and splendour the population is said to have exceeded thirty-five thousand. Instead of being a cluster of miserable mud huts, as

people have imagined in England, it has on the contrary been a beautiful little town; and, were it not for the extreme sultriness of the weather, would be a most delightful residence. Agues and fevers are very prevalent, even amongst the natives; and their consequences are long felt by invalids, who recover their strength but slowly.

Amidst the hot airless days of the dry season, there is however a delicious relief constantly at hand, in the then clear river; in which indeed throughout the year the people of both sexes bathe night and day, with very few scruples as to publicity. The water was turbid at the period of my visit, the rainy season having recently concluded; but sweet and good, producing fish in tolerable plenty, although in no great variety. I only heard of the Bagre, Trout, Boquinete, the last of which is said to be bony and insipid; the Sardina, a small fish; the Mojarra, a flat species; minnows, and a large sort of crayfish.

Alligators have also occasionally made their appearance even at this remote place; and one at no very distant period was caught alive, measur-

ing four varas (about eleven feet), near the Hacienda of Tepec.

The woods on the borders of the river are said, although I confess to having seen no proofs of it, to be the resort of wild turkeys, deer, hares, rabbits, and other varieties of game: but I know that the common green parrots, with parroquets, and a very large variety somewhat resembling the Indian maccaw, and named Guacamalla or Papagallo, are also abundant at no great distance.

Snakes, scorpions, and other venomous creatures abound in the houses as well as the woods; and the variety of iguanas and lizards amongst the rocks and thickets is very remarkable.

The articles of subsistence are somewhat dearer here than on the Table Land, evidently in consequence of the difficulties of transport. Vegetables however are sufficiently plentiful, but only of the most common species, although better kinds and greater varieties would undoubtedly thrive well. Fruits, which are also cheap and tolerably good, are grown in various parts of the neighbour-

ing Barranca. These chiefly consist of pines, peaches, apricots, apples, pears, aguacates, plantains, bananas, guayavas, grapes, quinces, musk and water melons. The delicious Chirimoya, two species of the Garambuyo plum, one yellow the other red; Ciruelo, or the service; Garlāmo, a black wild berry; and the sugar-cane, which being eaten raw in great quantities may also be called a fruit. To all these, however, must be added the luscious "Pitaya," the fruit of a tall tree of the Tuna family*, which is peculiarly fine at Bolaños. The vegetables are; pumpkins of various kinds, onions, beans, pease, garvanzas, Lenteja, which resembles the European lentil, Frijoles (long French beans of various colours), cabbage, chile of several varieties, ochra, camote, chayote, and probably some inferior wild vegetables, of which I did not hear the name. Maize is cultivated in small quantities, and the maguey is seen here and there; but not so abundantly as the Mescal, which is consumed in the fabric of a fiery spirit called Vino Mescal.

* A species of Cactus, called also Organo from its figure.

Bolaños appears to have been the original Indian name of the Barranca, and portions of several tribes still live in its immediate vicinity ; but of late years the distinction of nations has given way to a more general admixture of tribes, and it is no longer possible to distinguish the *Indios Menso*s* of this part of the country by their former national divisions. The Guicholes are in fact the only neighbouring people who still live entirely distinct from those around them, cherishing their own language, and studiously resisting all endeavours to draw them over to the customs of their conquerors.

These and other Indians make the shores of the Pacific about six days' journey from Bolaños, at their travelling rate of seven or eight leagues per day ; but the route is difficult and mountainous, and never pursued by any but themselves : the

* "Tame Indians," so called in contradistinction to the *Indios Bravos* or "Wild Indians" who have not embraced the Christian religion, and are generally at enmity with the whites.

road to San Blas by way of Guadalajara, being preferred by Europeans or Creoles.

The Guicholes are settled in the village of San Sebastian, which lies eighteen leagues to the westward of Bolaños, and two days and a half from the spot whence the salt is procured, which is called Quaristamba. They live in small scattered communities, but have also two villages, one named Santa Catalina, twelve leagues beyond San Sebastian, and the other called San Andres Coasmatl. The whole of the country however, between Bolaños and the Pacific, is very little known.

Near a village named San Martin, situated a long day's journey in the mountains to the southward, there is said to be a cave containing several figures or idols in stone; and had I been master of my time, I should most assuredly have visited a place which is still spoken of with much interest by the natives. All the antiquities I was enabled to procure at Bolaños, by offering rewards, were three very good stone wedges or axes of basalt; and on its being known that I would purchase curiosities,

a man came to inform me that at a long day's journey could be found *Huesos de los Gentiles*, or Bones of the Gentiles, of which he promised to bring me some if provided with mules, since their size was very great: he must however have been absent three days on this errand, and as my stay was limited, I could not give him the commission, although anxious to obtain what I had reason to believe were the bones of elephants or mastodons.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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THE
S K E T C H B O O K
OF
CAPT. G. F. LYON,
DURING
EIGHT MONTHS RESIDENCE
IN THE
R E P U B L I C O F M E X I C O,
PARTS I. AND II.
CONTAINING EACH
FIVE LITHOGRAPHIC DRAWINGS
BY
R. J. LANE AND OTHER ARTISTS.

JOURNAL
OF
A RESIDENCE AND TOUR
IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MEXICO
IN THE YEAR 1826.
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
MINES OF THAT COUNTRY.

BY CAPT. G. F. LYON, R.N. F.R.S.

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I LEFT Bolaños on the afternoon of the 31st of August, accompanied by Messrs. Auld and Price; and riding south along the base of the mountains through a rugged but beautiful country, we passed, after rising a wooded hill to avoid the river, the pretty little village of Cheinaltatan, which,

with its plantations of sugar-cane, is situated at the foot of a picturesque cliff by the eastern bank of the river. Hence, to the music of a heavy thunder-storm, we rode through close thickets and bad paths, until at a shady little brook we found some fishermen cooling their fish, which they were conveying to Bolaños, for sale. We purchased some very nice trout and catfish, and again went on until five leagues from Bolaños, and arrived at sunset at three small Rancho huts of Guatima, standing in an open space amongst the thickets above a rapid mountain-stream, whence trout and other fish are procured.

September 1.—My friends having left me at 7 A. M., we rode forward over very uneven paths, through roads bounded by impenetrable thickets, until we arrived at the fatiguing and steep ascent of the “Cuesta Pericos,” to a level of which we ascended after four hours of distressing labour to the cattle. There being abundance of fine grass amongst the tall firs and oak-trees, we turned our jaded animals loose to feed for a couple of hours.

The whole of this Cuesta is thickly wooded by the broad-leaved oak for the lower half, and towards the summit by fine pines and the Encino, on whose branches I remarked abundance of parasitic plants, particularly two kinds which closely resembled our English misletoe. In the course of my day's ride I observed above thirty trees of tall firs and oaks lying split and shivered to the ground by lightning. Woodpeckers of many beautiful varieties here abounded, particularly the species with a scarlet crest, and a very large kind nearly the size of a Bantam fowl.

Again ascending for three hours, we reached a small space of table-land on the top of the mountain well covered with maize fields, and stopped at one of the very small wretched huts with which the plain called Potierillos was dotted at distant intervals. A heavy thunder-storm prevented our sleeping with the baggage under the broad-leaved oaks; we were therefore obliged to beg shelter against the coming torrents within the hut, which had no side walls and merely a roof, beneath the

centre of which there was barely room to stand upright. Some management too was necessary to clear away a space for me to lie down on my *Armas de Agua* *, without the risk of being burnt by the fire which occupied the centre. While this matter was arranging I heard a loud outcry, and two little half-naked boys in an instant killed a considerable sized rattle-snake, which had been turned out of its bed to make room for me. The rain came down in torrents all night; but although stowed as close as figs, we were grateful for the shelter of the hut. Besides the fire and cooking apparatus, occupying the best half, were a man, his wife, five variously sized children, and five of my own party. Our hosts were very good-natured, excessively dirty, and miserably poor In-

* Or more properly, *Armas de Pelo*. These are two tanned goat-skins with the hair on, which are fastened to the pommel of the saddle, one on each side, and tied by a string round the waist to protect the legs from the rain. When not used, they are rolled up and confined with a leather thong; but are always attached to their place, and pendent from the saddle, ready for immediate use.

dians: but as I was the first European they had ever spoken with, they questioned me abundantly, and in some instances with great natural good sense.

September 2.—After a night of heavy rain, we set out in a fine clear morning down a wild rugged descent, and then occasionally over rich verdant plains; but more generally amongst bold picturesque mountains thickly clothed with wood. Here in a close defile we met three poor fellows, who informed us of their having been stopped and robbed two days before, by thirteen men completely armed. These rogues had plundered them of three mules with valuable cargoes; three horses with their furniture; five ounces of gold, and about one hundred dollars; completing the business by stripping them naked and leaving them bound hand and foot on the road all night, where next morning they were found and liberated by some travellers. At sunset we reached the Hacienda of Estanzuela, situated in a valley highly cultivated with maize; and had scarcely dismounted, when a party of seventeen armed merchants ar-

rived with valuable cargoes from Guadalajara. On the preceding day these people had met the robbers, fifteen in number, well mounted and completely armed, with a few on foot, and some who appeared to walk in ambush at a little distance. The parties, equally afraid of each other, met in so narrow a path that they actually touched; and when all had passed, the captain of the band fired a pistol at one of the merchants, who had recognized and called him by name. All the robbers then starting at full gallop were feebly pursued, yet the travellers cut off six loose horses. I was now informed that almost every man, and the captain in particular, of this formidable gang was known to the people of Guadalajara. They always fearlessly spent their money which was gained on the road, in the city; and then as openly assembled their forces and sallied out to plunder again. The merchants of the place had frequently but vainly called on the Government to put down these daring people; yet this blessed country, with "God and Liberty" for its motto,

continued to countenance, by the fear or indifference of its authorities, the most glaring and constant enormities.

September 3.—As only three of my little party were armed, I hired five men, who had three very peaceable-looking muskets, two swords, and a spear, to accompany me; and early on the morning of the 3rd set out with my troop for San Cristobal. In two hours we passed the spot on the top of the Cuesta del Malacate where the three men had been pillaged, and where the grass was eaten quite short by the horses of the robbers. Soon after descending this very steep mountain-pass we met a boy, from whom we learnt that three armed men on horseback and two on foot had passed a short time before us; and I afterwards heard that they carried forward an account of my force, with the opinion that my cargo was of great value; probably from their having mistaken three heavy boxes of mineralogical specimens for cases of dollars. These men were afterwards seen to ford the river, and were traced to the mountain at which the robbers

were assembled. At noon we reached a pass called La Sigueta, merely remarkable for having a few huts, and some magueys on the ridge. Up a deep valley to the N. E. of this place is the Real del Mesquital, at which a small gold mine is worked by a few poor people, who having no means of procuring effective implements, merely contrive to collect enough for their support.

At three, after winding along the ledges of the precipitous mountains which hem in the Rio San Cristobal, we descended through a delightful natural shrubbery to a village of the same name on its northern bank. I put up under the portal of the Alcalde's shop, where at half past three the thermometer stood at 89° ,—a heat fully equal to that of Bolaños, which this place resembles in some slight respects, although far inferior to it in beauty. I was surrounded all the afternoon by a crowd of staring people, to which I was by this time fully accustomed; and as I sadly wished to wash myself and put on a clean shirt, I was at length obliged to perform these operations in public, even

in the presence of two ladies of the Alcalde's family.—Fresh news of the robbers arrived in the evening, stating that they had plundered a large requa of mules. The Alcalde, who wished to go to Guadalaxara, now proposed to accompany me, as soon as he could on the morrow raise a force equal to mine, in order that if possible we might catch some of the rogues, to whom he had a mortal dislike. This was mingled with no small portion of dread, in consequence of their having lately robbed, stripped and bound him, together with a party with whom he travelled. Notice was also brought that a saddled horse, which had been standing all the past night and morning in the wood on the opposite side of the river, had been ridden off; and report said, that the robbers were in Escalon (a mountain-pass not far distant) awaiting a very rich cargo (no other than my poor shirts, stockings, and specimens!). My day was spent, as the preceding evening, in being stared at and questioned; and I was treated with a specimen of magisterial equity by the Alcalde, who had been

loudly boasting to me, even in the face of all these robbing adventures, of the excellence and justice of the laws of Xalisco.—A man came up to us bathed in blood, which streamed from a cut in his head four inches in length inflicted with a hatchet : yet the brute who committed this outrage was only sentenced to four days' imprisonment ! To this succeeded another act of equally rigid justice. We had observed a strong light on the beach, and soon learnt from a poor ferryman that a man had burnt his little watch-house. The culprit, a drunken quarrelsome fellow, but in tolerable circumstances, was merely desired to rebuild the hut and make some arrangement with the boatman ;—and with this ended our Sunday evening amusements.

September 4.—The village of San Cristobal contains in itself about 300 souls, and the people within the “Cure” in the surrounding Ranchos amount to between 2000 and 3000 *mal contados* ; a convenient term, signifying “something more or less.” It is situated between three rivers, none of which, however, were of any considerable depth or magni-

tude at this period, or indeed at any other, owing to the ruggedness of their beds and the frequency of falls and rocky shoals. Of these, the Rio Guichipila passes from the N.E.; and another, El Colchon, also enters the Rio Grande from the N. N. W. The Rio Grande, Santiago, and San Cristobal, (by all which appellations the one great river is known here,) passes the village, running to the west, through a Barranca, closely hemmed in by precipitous mountains, clothed to their summits with mimosas and stunted oaks. This Barranca is of considerable extent, very close and sultry, but at the same time perfectly healthy. On all the level spaces, maize is abundantly cultivated; higher up to the eastward, where the valley opens a little, the sugar-cane is the chief produce. The river runs quickly over a stony bed, is turbid and full of rapids and bars; and all navigation, except for small canoes between these frequent impediments, is entirely impossible. I believe that the greater part of the river's course hence to the Pacific is in this manner obstructed. The Rio Bolaños enters the Rio

Grande a few leagues to the westward of the pass. The waters at this time were so low, that animals passed at a ford immediately above a ridge of stones, crossing from bank to bank: but it not unfrequently happens, that for several weeks in the rainy season they must pass by swimming; and the towns-people, who excel in this exercise, are paid highly for guiding them over. A large canoe takes travellers across the ferry for a very trifling sum.

From what I have said of the Rio Grande, its inutility for commercial purposes must be apparent; more particularly when it is known, that instead of passing close to the city of Guadalaxara, as appears by the maps, it does not approach that place within six leagues: and at that distance its current, which had been even and uninterrupted from leaving the lake Chapala, changes to the broken obstructed stream in the Barranca of San Cristobal. To the eastward indeed, where it passes through several extensive and rich Haciendas, the river is generally deep and free from im-

pediments ; yet, with the exception of the canoes at the ferries, I know of little navigation upon it. The same fish are procured as at Bolaños ; and alligators are occasionally seen, but never approaching the passes.

At 5 P. M. our warlike party crossed the river ; and the road lay along the depths of the Barranca close by the banks to the S. E. for about six miles, after which it rose gradually towards the foot of the Pass of Escalon. As we pushed through the close thickets by the river side, I several times perceived a very strong smell of bugs, proceeding, as the people informed me, from those called "compostela," which are sometimes found in large clusters beneath the leaves, where however I searched in vain for them. When we had ridden three or four leagues, night set in, and a portion of us slept under a shed, containing a rude weaving-machine for Serapes. As for the Alcalde, he had filed off with half our party to some huts in the wood, where he expected better accommodations. Those who remained kept me awake half

the night by their questions about our religion, opinions of the pope, confessions, purgatory, marriage of priests, and image-worship. Many people in the state of Xalisco waver greatly on these points, in consequence of the constant publication and distribution, from Guadalajara, of many well written papers, opening the eyes of the natives to the idolatry in which they have been reared.

September 5.—At daylight I toiled up the precipitous pass of Escalon, leading my party, with my cocked gun and pistols in my belt, expecting every instant an attack from men in ambush. We however reached the summit very quietly; of my five hired men, two only daring to keep in advance with me. As for the others, they persisted in remaining in the rear, “looking for the Alcalde,” who had not appeared. On issuing from the thicket, we brushed past a little cross recently erected over one of the men last murdered, and then entered on a tolerably level plain, intersected at intervals by abrupt little woody dells, in which we kept on the alert; the Alcalde not joining us

until we neared Milpillas, when our force amounted to seventeen men variously armed. Hence from a rising ground I observed on the plain eleven men on horseback; and as the robbers had quartered here for two days, it was natural to suppose these were the identical gang. Amongst my companions, who had just been threatening to eat the rogues alive, a dead silence now took place, and only five could be found to join me in cantering forward to the strangers; who, dismounting, formed themselves in a line and prepared to receive us; but we soon discovered them to be travellers like ourselves, and equally determined to resist the banditti.

When the Alcalde with his immense pistols and his companions joined us, they blamed me much for having left them, declaring that had they known we intended to be the aggressors, they would have been the first to cut the rogues to pieces. We met, in fact, with no impediment by the way; but this was owing more to good fortune than to our own valour. At about two leagues

beyond Milpillas we passed a little rocky dell, to which the descent is marked by five newly erected crosses, showing the site on which that number of Arrieros had recently been murdered while defending the cargoes in their charge. On a mound at a short distance was placed a small rude cross, to mark the burial-place of some other victim, with an inscription in charcoal humbly requesting a prayer for the good of his soul.



In all, we passed eleven of these memorials. It was but too evident, however, that I had much more to dread from some of my travelling companions, than from the acknowledged villains. I had quarrelled with the former on account of

their late shameful desertion of me, and they soon began to show their desire of revenge. As I rode a little before them, one of the principal men of the party actually drew a pistol on my servant, while several of the others cocked their guns in readiness to follow his fire. On this, the servant galloped up to me in great trepidation, entreating (in which request he was joined by the muleteers) that I would ride forward, my gallant Mexicans having very openly declared to him that they would shoot me also. Being already fully aware of my danger, I rejected this advice; and instead of attempting to escape, which would have been perfectly useless, I turned back upon these traitors, and with my arms in readiness dared any one to fire upon me. This conduct on my part was quite unexpected;—not an arm was lifted, some swords were sheathed, and an apology was made to me. Matters were thus, apparently, made up between us; but I had still ample reason to expect that some attack would be made on me when we should arrive at Guadalupe. Whilst

proceeding in this doubtful temper, it so happened that I brought down a vulture on the wing, which fell dead at some distance before the party,—an event which caused a very evident sensation, and raised my gun high in the estimation, and perhaps the dread, of my fellow travellers.

After riding over a tolerably level and occasionally cultivated plain,—at 4 P. M. we entered Guadalajara *, the capital of the State of Xalisco and the second city in the Mexican Republic. In the suburbs I was stopped at the Guarita, an outpost of the custom-house, where, after examining all my trunks to search for money, possession was taken of five hundred dollars, in consequence of my not bringing a pass from the neighbouring state, which rendered them contraband,—an extraordinary law, peculiar to this country; and my little property would have been lost to me for ever, but for the kind assistance of my friend Don Manuel Luna. I put up at the Meson San José,

* Eighteen leagues to the southward of San Cristobal. Temp. 3 P. M. 78°.

which was crowded with all sorts of people, who have the privilege of walking into every room, and tormenting strangers to purchase whatever they carry for sale. It was a most filthy place; and I was rejoiced when Don Manuel Luna, to whom I brought letters, and whose character and hospitality are proverbial, pressed me to remove to the house of his partner Don Catalino Gomez. There I had excellent rooms, and was perfectly my own master.

In the evening I accompanied my hosts with their wives to the theatre, with which I was very much pleased. It was neatly fitted up and ornamented, and the boxes were well filled by ladies, dressed rather in the extreme of French and English fashions; so that had it not been for the universal smoking, and the silence and good behaviour of the lower class of the audience, I might have almost fancied myself in England. It was indeed a singular thing to observe fair delicate handsome girls, attired in the richest ball-dresses, and many with plumes of ostrich feathers, smoking

cigars, which they held in their gloveless hands; and to see displayed, when they smiled through their clouds on some favoured swain, a row of teeth which would almost vie with ebony in colour. For my part, not smoking in public, I devoted all my attention to the ladies in our box, whose cigars it was my duty to light at lamps in front of us. I admired the play, which was a translation from our Roxalana; and when it was over, the audience called somewhat loudly for a dance by a favourite Spanish actress. On this a person came forward and announced that “Madama Olivarez presented herself to say, that not having brought her breeches or dancing-shoes, she hoped to be excused.” “Let her take mine”—“Let her go for them” was vociferated from the pit and gallery. The man again came forward to announce that “unable to resist the wishes of so respectable an assembly, Madama Olivarez had sent for her breeches.” A very merry farce succeeded the comedy; but in both pieces the prompter, who occupied a box in front of the stage, as is the custom

in all foreign theatres, spoke much louder than the performers, some of whom did not even know a word of their parts. To this succeeded the Bolero by Madama Olivarez, who really danced with much grace and spirit, in company with a very tolerable male performer. It is not the custom here for women to enter the pit, which is neatly fitted with backs to the benches, and the seats are all numbered. On returning from the play, we learnt that a party of robbers at nine in the evening, while the streets were full of people, had attacked the shop of a merchant, in order to rob it; and that a battle had taken place with knives and fire-arms, in which the assailants were beaten off.

September 6. 8 A. M. 70°, 2 P. M. 73°.—My first expedition on this morning was to the booths of the leather-cutters, or embossers, whose beautiful works are so deservedly celebrated; and I made some purchases, as specimens for England, for which by the kind interference of Don Manuel I never paid more than half the price at first demanded. In the afternoon I drove with my friend,

in one of the hackney vehicles (which are quite as good as our London ones, and drawn by two mules with a postillion,) to the "Belén," or public hospital; an immense edifice in the suburbs, built with all the solidity of Spanish architecture. Its wards and corridors were high, spacious, and well ventilated, and for a Mexican establishment amazingly clean. There were at this time only 160 patients in the hospital; and of these, above one third, women as well as men, were suffering from stabs, or wounds with stones. I learnt from the administrador, who also very obligingly showed me his books of entries, that quite as many females as men were brought in, dangerously wounded in frays amongst themselves. The sexes are of course in separate wards; and each patient has a bed-place, or stone bench, divided by walls from his neighbours. There is likewise an entire ward with a heavy grated door, which is set apart for wounded men brought in as prisoners from the nightly broils; and a distinct portion of the hospital is devoted to the lazarus, or lepers, a most wretched

set of beings, who drag on a life of constant suffering and misery without hope of relief. There were seven or eight of these poor people lying on their beds, from whence they were unable to move, yet very urgent for cigars, which we gave them.

In the extensive Campo Santo or burying-ground of the hospital, five bodies were lying for interment. Of these, three were murdered men, all stabbed in the head or neck ; and I was informed that as many as fifteen victims have sometimes been brought for burial in one morning : yet no inquiry is ever made for the assassins, whose punishment if they are caught rarely exceeds a few days' imprisonment, and hitherto since the expulsion of the Spaniards has never been that of death. Four of the bodies which I now saw were to be thrown into a deep pit, in which all unowned corpses are tumbled together : the other, which was of an old woman, was to be buried in a grave, for which her friends had paid two reals, the sexton's fee. It appeared from all I could learn at this visit, that none of the hosts of pampered priests and friars,

who are so importunate in collecting money to purchase masses for the souls of the unconfessed or those who are in purgatory, ever volunteer to read the burial service over their bodies when they die *poor* and in a hospital.

In a small filthy cell, feebly lighted by a little grating in the door, lay the only mad person confined there,—a poor woman of about forty, whose keeper acknowledged that she was at all times perfectly tranquil and quiet; yet the wretched creature is doomed to drag out the remainder of her existence in this barricaded and gloomy dungeon. She had lately a neighbour in misery,—an unhappy woman of rank, young, handsome, and, to her misfortune, rich. Her intellect being suddenly disordered, her brother (now possessing her property) confined her in such a place as I have described; but death in three years mercifully relieved her from her sufferings.

Returning from Belén we stopped for a time at the Chapel of San Gonzalo de Amarante, better known by the name of El Baylador (the dancer).

Here I was so fortunate as to find three old women praying rapidly, and at the same time very seriously dancing before the image of the saint, who is celebrated for his miraculous cures of “frios y calenturas” (colds and agues). These grave and venerable personages, who were perspiring most profusely at every pore, had selected for their figure that so well known in the country as the “Guajolote” or turkey dance, from its resemblance in dignity and grace to the enamoured curvettings of those important birds: and ever and anon these faithful votaries murmured forth the following invocation, in a mingled tone of singing and moaning:

“*San Gonzalo de Amarante,*

Que sacas pescado del mar;

Saca me de este cuidado,

Que ya te vengo baylar.

“CHORUS.—(*moans*)—Ahhūm! ūm! ūm! ōh!
ōh,” &c.*

* San Gonzalo de Amarante,

Who can wile the fish out of the sea;

Which ended, they began pirouetting with renewed energy. It must be very evident that all this dancing, although it draws not down a miracle, must go far towards curing the devotee, who is probably a rheumatic nervous old woman, unaccustomed to exercise, and in consequence stiff and suffering in all her joints. Inspired by faith, the votary performs that which no other power could induce her to undertake, and dances unceasingly during six or eight hours, until every joint recovers its elasticity. The interposition or rather the individual power of the saint (for saints in Mexico in most instances take precedence of the Divinity,) is most fully established. He receives as an offering of gratitude, a wax leg, arm, or some other part of the body in miniature, which is hung with hundreds of others to an extensive frame-work on one side of the chapel, while the opposite wall is covered with small oil-coloured and detached paintings of

Relieve me from these my distresses
Which bring me thus dancing to thee.

CHORUS.—Oh ! o——h ! &c.

the miracles performed on those who could thus afford to testify their devotion. In front of the figurantes, a number of other women were kneeling with sick children, or praying on their own account:—but the whole of this idolatrous farce is now going out of repute, and I believe owes its slight remaining credit to a desire of opposing the Government, which has long endeavoured to put it down.

Of this saint, who was once worshiped in Mexico, and in fact all over the country, history has told us but little in his published legend. Where he was born or reared, no one appears either to know or care: it is only certain that he resided on the banks of some river called Tamaga, over which he built a bridge, and all who were unable to pay the toll-money were obliged to dance across it. The first miracle of this righteous man was worked in order to prove the force of excommunication; for having performed this ceremony over a loaf of bread, it became “*negro como un carbon*” (as black as a coal).

The pious liberality of the saint for his neigh-

bour was ample. He was wont to go to the river's side, and calling the fishes he supplied all the poor from those which flocked to his hands ; after which the others were set at liberty. He struck a rock, and a rivulet of "very savoury wine" gushed forth: and touching another, there issued from it a stream of "crystalline water,"—which last remains to this day.

There are other wonders to be related of San Gonzalo; but I shall have said enough of him when I mention that, by forty days' fasting and flagellation he was translated, after a life of unblemished chastity, from this world into heaven.

Sept. 7.—This day was chiefly devoted to visiting churches ; all so much alike, that little is to be said of them : they were generally very gaudy, and crowded with idols.

I believe the following is a list of all the religious edifices. The Catedral. N^a S^a del Pilar. La Capilla de Jesus. Mexicalcingo. San Sebastian de Analco. San José de Analco. Sanctuario de N^a S^a de Guadalupe, and La Capilla Cle-

rigal de N^a S^a de la Soledad.—All the monasteries have large churches attached to them. These are: San Francisco, San Augustin, San Juan de Dios, El Carmen, S^{to} Domingo, Merced, and San Felipe; the latter is a congregation neither of priests or friars, but partaking of the nature of both. The nunneries, which have also their churches, are Moneca, Gracia, Capuchina, Teresa, and Jesus Maria.—Besides these institutions are two religious establishments, S^{ta} Clara, and San Diego, for the education of young women, who can marry, or leave them at any time. There are also three colleges for young men: San Juan, Seminario, and Clerigal;—to these must be added, a *Compania Catedra de Doctores* of medicine, laws, and theology; with five schools for boys. Amongst the public buildings are, the National Hospital for men and women. A Casa de Moneda or mint, which is a very noble building*; a Casa Consistorial, and the Palacio Obispada, a fine edifice on

* The machinery is now out of order, and requires a thorough repair and improvement.

the right of the cathedral. The Palacio, or Government House, is a magnificent building, containing, besides the residence of the governor, the public offices and an immense prison. This edifice is situated on the eastern side of a neat square called the Plaza de Armas. The north is bounded by a side of the cathedral (of which the front is to the west) and the Casa de Congreso. West and south are "Portales de Comercio," or Piazzas, beneath which are good shops and standings.

The square has an extensive portion of its centre neatly paved, and inclosed by low walls with stone seats; once shaded by fine trees, which, having been planted by the Spaniards, were felled by the Republicans; and miserable little twigs are now growing up, planted by the same hands which hewed down their predecessors. They forgot, however, in their patriotic zeal, to destroy the palace and other magnificent buildings at the same time.

We could gain admittance to the hall of only one nunnery, that of Santa Maria de Gracia, at

which the elder sisters alone vouchsafed to show themselves. I was the first Englishman whom some of these ladies had ever seen. And Don Manuel Luna who accompanied me to visit them, answered in the affirmative to their questions as to my being a Jew, gratuitously informing them also, that I had, as is believed to be the case with Jews by many of the country-people,—a tail ! which the reverend sisters appeared implicitly to credit ; one of them very shrewdly inquiring whether the tails of heretics fell off on their conversion to the Catholic faith ?

In the other nunneries the sisters never show themselves ; and the vow of the Capuchina in particular is so strict, that when once a woman has taken the veil, she is never seen again even by her nearest relatives.

The city of Guadalaxara is built with great regularity ; the streets running at right angles, well paved, and having raised pathways on each side. The houses, with the exception of those in the suburbs, are finely built ; but I was most particularly

struck with the Portales de Comercio, erected on every side of three immense squares of houses, all built upon precisely the same model, and having the lower part devoted to shops and stores, while above are good family residences. The city is said to contain 80,000 souls; but I should not imagine the population to amount to above 50,000. Lamps are suspended at the corners of all the streets, but are only used in the absence of moonlight. A watch patrols the city throughout the night; but as it is generally composed of Leperos, they in many instances are more prone to abet than to interrupt robbers. The town is abundantly supplied with water from a mountain three leagues to the N. W., named Cerro del Col, as also from the stream of Mexicalcingo, which passes the suburbs to the southward, and has its waters raised by machinery. There are seven Plazas in which are fountains, and all the religious houses are supplied in the same manner.

The Paséo is a very extensive and shady drive, under double rows of fine trees by a shallow stream

on the eastern side of the town, and on feast-days it is enlivened by carriages and gay cavaliers on horseback. The little stream is in some places allowed to flow in its natural channel, and is there frequented by numbers of washerwomen; but in the most frequented part, where the streets lead to the Paséo, it is partially confined within little locks and channels, where the depth is sufficient to admit of bathing,—a luxury which the most complete publicity cannot check in either sex or age! At the northern extremity of the Paséo is a large inclosed space, prettily wooded and thickly set with shrubs, divided into neat squares and alleys, called the Alameda*; but it is now overgrown with weeds, and so sadly neglected as to be no longer the favourite lounge of the better classes of inhabitants, as in the time of the Spaniards.

In my rambles I visited an immense mass of building, erected by a Spanish bishop as a work-house for the poor. It is now a very dirty ill-kept

* So named from the White Poplar (Alamo) with which the public walks in Old Spain are usually planted.

barrack for about five hundred soldiers, and thousands of houseless wretches who ought to find a home there, see above three-fourths of the spacious wards entirely untenanted. Here in the "Quartel" of the artillery I saw a number of cannon, some of twenty-four pound calibre, and about a dozen eighteen-pound English carronades,—all neglected, and filling with rust, although very great trouble and expense must have attended their transport from San Blas, by the only route through the difficult Barrancas of Mochitiltec.

In the suburbs I frequently entered cottages in which the people were employed in weaving Serapes (or coarse cloths) on very simple looms, and always met with great civility from the assembled workers, generally of one family. One man or woman sat carding the wool, another spinning, a third winding on the shuttle, and others weaving and singing. Some of my excursions were made in the hackney coaches already spoken of, and which, to the amount of twenty or thirty, are always to be found standing near the cathedral.

The shops of Guadalajara are generally rich and well supplied, but of an uninviting exterior. The inns or Mesons are filthy in the extreme, and merely afford an unfurnished room to travellers, who are obliged to procure food from little cook-shops, the odour and appearance of which would turn the stomach of even such as are not over-nice. One or two tolerable coffee-shops are to be found; and ices can be obtained at any time, although not of a very good quality. The town is well supplied with fruits and vegetables, amongst which last are excellent potatoes,—the first I had hitherto met with of any description.

The market-place, which is large and dirty, is crowded by small awnings, and all the articles are exposed for sale on the ground, which is covered with squashed vegetable matter and all sorts of rubbish. Quantities of cooking women occupy one side of the square, where crowds of Indians and others are constantly assembled.

Guadalajara at the period of my visit was in a state of feverish excitement, which gave reason

to fear some dangerous change in the public affairs. Party-spirit under various forms was carried on with extreme bitterness. The Iturbidists, Centralists, Federalists, and other factions, all indulged their respective feelings in numerous anonymous papers, hawked about in all the Portales and through the streets;—insulting pamphlets against the Governor and his public officers; others in his defence;—papers exposing the gross impositions of the friars, or upholding them in their absurd pretensions;—threats to the few remaining Spaniards and strangers of all descriptions, with strong abuse of private individuals,—were constantly to be met with; and murders and robberies were frequently committed, without any dread of punishment beyond a few days' imprisonment. This is of no consequence to the Leperos, or people of the lowest class, who still sleep on the ground as heretofore. They have nothing to do; and may either gamble all day, or sit at the prison windows and chat with their friends in the street, who flock to the bars in motley groups, and are seldom driven

away by the guard, which is composed of their own class.

It does not appear likely that affairs will long remain in this unsettled position ; and it was the opinion of many of my acquaintance, that one "Grito" (a rising cry) would lead the whole city either to rebellion against the state, or to the cold-blooded murder of every Spaniard, stranger, and even native, of property. The European Spaniards settled in the country, and who individually are not blameable for the tyranny of their nation towards the Mexicans, are certainly to be pitied. Their lives are still in constant jeopardy, and the more so if they are rich,—the chance of plunder being a great inducement to patriotism with a Mexican, as well as every other mob.

The opinion of these people entertained in England being formed from gazettes, copies of laws, and proclamations, is sadly erroneous as respects the political state of the Republic ; as are also our conceptions of this terrestrial paradise, drawn from the accounts of travellers or compilers, who

write in many instances of places which they have never visited. As well might a foreigner who had enjoyed a ramble through Greenwich Park, write a glowing account of the umbrageous beauties of the mining district of Cornwall, as the mere tourist from Vera Cruz, through the beautiful Xalapa and gorgeous Puebla, to Mexico, pretend to give an opinion on the northern states. We are, in fact, all in the dark about many parts of the Republic of Mexico; and it is to be lamented that some of our men of talent, instead of rambling for the twentieth time through the continent of Europe, do not cross the Atlantic and perform a tour through all the provinces of New Spain, in order to publish to their countrymen an account of the present state of a nation,—which from its position and circumstances must fill, at no very distant period, an important political station.

At present the northern provinces of Mexico are in a sad state of degradation. This is owing in a great measure to the cruelty of the Spaniards, in having denied to them the most common instruc-

tion beyond that which was necessary for continuing them in the state of barbarous idolatry which served to rivet their shackles.

Their degradation therefore must be attributed to their former masters; and Vice being the daughter of Ignorance, many of their faults may be traced to the same source; although it must be confessed that until the time of the Revolution, crimes which now pass unnoticed were severely punished. An enslaved man is certainly more prone by his situation to acquire vices, than he who is free; and it is a natural consequence, that the mental degradation of the natives of New Spain should be long felt, and only remedied by time and the blessings of that education which has hitherto been denied to them. Ambition is now the ruling passion; and all active spirits hope to arrive at those situations of importance, many of which are filled by people from the lowest and meanest mechanical vocations. Half the men who engaged in the late struggles were more inspired by a prospect of future aggrandizement, than by a pure patriotic spirit,—a

virtue which is rare even in more enlightened countries.

Now that the common enemy is expelled, it is high time that the general good should be secured; that just laws should be instituted and vigorously supported; and that those branches of commerce and industry which were so cruelly prohibited, should be protected and encouraged.

Guadalaxara*, being in itself a sovereign state, has modelled its own laws; scarcely one of which it strictly follows, although vaunting itself not a little on a penal code and trial by jury. At the same time it is not negligent in exacting a very unpopular income and property tax: another, too, is general throughout the Republic; and, considering the impoverished state of the nation, is certainly a very extraordinary one; that is, a duty of two per cent on all money introduced into the state even from a neighbouring province, although it may be the produce of, and coined in that part. There is scarcely a town or village in the northern

* Called also Xalisco or Jalisco.

states, and I may almost say throughout the Republic, in which are not to be found unfinished monuments of the Spaniards. Ruins of spacious half-built churches, hospitals, prisons, public promenades and aqueducts,—all strike the eye of the stranger, who cannot but lament that the infant Republic has no present means to finish or preserve such edifices as may at a future time be of the utmost national importance. Liberty is all that is now thought of and talked about,—and very naturally, after so many years of slavery; but in the mean while in many states the rich and the poor are alike unprotected, the injured seek in vain for redress, and the sincere patriot mourns over the necessarily tardy advancement of the glory and embellishment of his country.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from Guadalajara—Village of Tonalá—Lake of Chapala—Long Contest between the Indians and Spaniards—Isle of Mescal—La Barca—Springs of Boiling Water—Zamora—Cipiméo—Flocks of Orioles—Valladolid—Ozumatlan-mines—Tlalpuhaxua-mines—El Oro Mine—Toluca—Lerma to Mexico.

Sept. 9.—**O**N the 9th, six very fine mules, for which with their furniture I had paid forty-five dollars each, arrived from a distance of thirty leagues, from whence I had sent to procure them; and I prepared for my outset on the morrow, having provided myself with such curious specimens of earthenware, leather, and other peculiar manufactures of the place as I could contrive to carry.

Sept. 10.—I left Guadalajara early on the morning of the 10th, accompanied part of the way by Don Manuel Luna, whose genuine kindness and hospitality, with that of his partner Don Catalino Gomez, I shall never forget. Our road to the

eastward lay over a level plain studded with pretty Indian villages, whose situation was chiefly marked by their surrounding clusters of trees. On a slightly rising ground to the left, at about four miles from Guadalajara, is the village of Tonalá, whose inhabitants (pure Indians) are celebrated for their manufacture of all kinds of earthenware; some of which nearly approach the Etruscan in lightness and elegance of form. Their toys, masks, grotesque figures and ornaments, are most deservedly admired. Our road was crowded by Indians on their way to market, laden with various goods piled in large light frames, suspended at the back by a broad leather band round the breast or forehead. Their dark woollen dresses, long raven hair, and quiet salutations, rendered them particularly picturesque objects as they trotted (their usual travelling pace) along the broad roadway, which towards the S. E. by E. is bounded by the mountains of Chapala. On either side the plains were cultivated in maize and corn, or left in the wildness of nature as pasturage for nume-

rous herds of fine cattle and brood mares, while large flocks of sheep are frequently to be seen in the brushwood. At two leagues to our left flowed the Rio Grande from the eastward, at the foot of a fine range of hills; and we here and there crossed small tributary streamlets, in which I observed a small species of crane, egrets, and two varieties of ducks. We arrived at length, after a ride of twelve leagues, on the highly cultivated lands of the Hacienda of Atequiza, at the Casa Grande, where a letter of introduction procured me a very kind reception from Don Pedro de Olasagarra, and his son Don Manuel, who had been educated in England. These gentlemen showed me their garden,—rich in the fruits of their country; dairy, cheese-rooms, and large granaries, and I passed a most agreeable evening in their society. The Hacienda, which has the advantage of being traversed by the Rio Grande, is now one of the richest in the immediate neighbourhood of Guadalajara, although it had suffered severely by fire and pillage in the war with the Indians of Chapala.

Sept. 11.—Don Pedro having very obligingly furnished me with a guide, I set out early for the Lake of Chapala, sending my people and cargoes by a shorter route to Poncitlan, which is about six leagues E. S. E. of the Hacienda. Heavy rain which had fallen during the night had quite flooded the country, and made our road very unpleasant, till on passing a low mountain we saw beneath us the beautiful Lake with its great expanse of water, and two small but celebrated islands. Descending the partially cultivated side of the mountain, we arrived at the Campo de Tlachichilco, erected by the Spaniards, and situated on the northern bank at about three leagues S. E. of the Hacienda of Atequiza. It is perhaps but little known out of Mexico, that the Lake Chapala was the scene of one of the longest and bloodiest revolutionary struggles between a strong Spanish force stationed at the “Campo,” and the Indians on the small isle of Mescal. In consequence of some wrongs which had been inflicted on them, these poor people fled with their families from the villages of Mescala, San Miguel, San Pedro, Chicán,

Tlachichilco, and other places, all situated along the borders of the Lake. Under the command of a much respected priest, the Cura of Xacomatlan (named Don Marcos Castellano), they maintained with wonderful bravery and perseverance a war of five years' continuance, during which they never once suffered themselves to be surprised, and underwent, most patiently, extreme hardships and privations. Opposed to them the Spaniards collected a force of a thousand men, including soldiers and seamen; and fourteen large launches with a schooner were with great labour and difficulty conveyed in frame, and with their guns, from the port of San Blas by the Barrancas of Mochitiltec. Three of the boats carried long 24-pounder guns; two had 8-pounders, and two 6-pounders, while each of the others had large swivels, and the schooner mounted six guns. Yet with all this force incessantly besieging and attacking the little island, these brave Indians held out from the year 1812,—keeping themselves constantly supplied with provisions by the activity of their small canoes, which nightly eluded the

cordon of guard-boats, and in the most extraordinary manner kept up a constant communication with the shores of the lake : nor would the offers of terms from the enemy, or their own great sufferings, induce them to yield until 1817, when all resources from the main land had failed. It was then that the remaining handful of gallant men, amounting as it is said to two hundred out of above two thousand in number, consented to surrender on the promise of life and liberty,—articles which the Spaniards kept more faithfully than had been their custom in the revolutionary war. At this time the Spanish force was commanded in chief by a Capitan de Navio, and in second by a Teniente de Navio ; yet the canoes captured one launch with fifty men, by the Indians splashing water over the arms of the Spaniards during the battle ; sunk another ; and in various attacks with muskets and their slings killed great numbers of their assailants.

I had brought an order from Guadalaxara for a boat to carry me to the Indian Isle ; and the eight men who rowed me having all been engaged in

the war, under the Spanish flag, recounted to me such anecdotes of the bravery, activity, endurance, and devotedness of these people, that I never more regretted my deficiency as a writer to embody so romantic a history in the form of a novel. One of the most daring exploits took place at a time when the island was closely invested night and day by the cordon of Spanish guard-boats; yet the canoes passed unseen between them, and a body of Indians landed and marched to the Hacienda of Atequiza. They burnt and plundered it, and carrying off a store of corn and provisions of which they were in great want, returned safely and unobserved through the same impediments to their little retreat. They frequently landed and destroyed the outposts of the Spaniards at the Campo, and by their constant surprises kept them in continual alarm. Even the women fought with as much determined bravery as the men, and were scarcely less feared by their besiegers; instances sometimes occurring in which these devoted creatures rushed on the bayonets of those who had

slain their husbands, for the wild satisfaction of killing with their daggers the soldiers who had fired the fatal shot.

Until the “Grito” (war-cry) ran through their country, the Chapala Indians had ever been esteemed the most mild and quiet of the agricultural villagers, and their countenances bespeak a peculiar placidity of temper : but a sense of wrongs called forth a latent spirit which struck terror into the disciplined troops of their oppressors, and placed their name conspicuously on the list of the liberators of their country. At the beginning of the contest, an incident occurred which is worthy of the brightest age of the Romans. Unarmed, ignorant of war, suffering from want of food and shelter, surrounded by their wives and children,—“Cruz * sent to them a proclamation, exhorting obedience to the king of Spain. The commissioner read it in a loud voice to the Indians, (who listened to him most attentively,) concluding with energy, and saying that if they did not submit, *blood would flow in abundance !* Having

* The Spanish Commander.

finished reading, he inquired of the Indians, ‘How reply you to this?’ when they, as if inspired by the same spirit and speaking with one voice, replied simultaneously, *Let the blood flow*!*”

The Island of Mescal is a small rocky place, little more than half a mile in length and a quarter in width, of an irregular form, and having a small narrow isthmus running from its northern end. It could be ascended with ease in any direction. The island is about four miles from Tlachichilco, and sixteen from the opposite southern shore of the lake, which extends from it S.W. by W. about thirty miles, and in the opposite quarter fifty more, hemmed in on all sides by steep ridges of moun-

* “Cruz les mandó un papelote exhortandolos a la obediencia al Rey de España. El comisionado lo leyó en voz alta, y los Indios lo escucharon atentamente; concluió con brabatas, diciendo que si no se sometean ‘*Correria la sangre en abundancia;*’ y al terminar preguntó a los Indios ¿Que respondéis á estó? y ellos si estuvieron insuflados por un espiritu, y hablaron por una boca, respondieron simultaneamente ‘*Que corra el sangre!*’ ”—Extracted from a recently published work on the Mexican Revolution: by Don Carlos Bustamante: Mexico.

tains, which to the east are but dimly seen in the distance.

Off Mescal is a smaller islet, of about eight or ten acres, on which the Indians also for a time maintained themselves, until the straitness of their siege obliged them to join their companions on the larger one. I looked in vain on the little rock for traces of Indian habitations, and learnt that throughout the contest the warriors had not even huts, but sheltered themselves and their wretched families from the burning sun or overwhelming tropical rains, beneath boughs, blankets, or mats, brought from the main land. In all their misery, they sowed maize every year on one or two small ridges; but the produce, although cultivated with the greatest care, and held sacred by the famished women and children who saw it growing within their reach, did not answer an hundredth part of their necessity. Not a bush or tree was left standing, and the want of fuel was latterly as severely felt as that of food. One solitary building alone remains, to record at once the poverty

and piety of the Indian patriots. It is a very small unornamented chapel, of about twelve feet square, which was respected by the Spaniards after their hard-earned conquest, and stands as an affecting monument to the memory of those who fell, and whose graves, as I was informed, were dug round the sacred edifice.

The Spaniards on becoming masters of Mescal, erected two large fortresses, which, although strong from their situation, are never likely to be of any other use than as dépôts for convicts; to which I hear that they are about to be appropriated. Great sums have been expended on these works; but before they were completely finished, the country had changed masters. There were no guns in the principal fortress, which is now in the custody of one man; but within its walls were piled large heaps of stones, which he informed me were ammunition for the slings, which the Indians use with great dexterity.

While at Tlachichilco, which has a ruined little shrub-covered fort, a few huts, and some sheds over

the Spanish launches, now falling rapidly into decay, I shot some very handsome gray marmots, of the size of Guinea-pigs, and having very bushy tails. They live in the stone walls round the maize fields, and commit great havoc amongst the young green crops.

The lake is said to be of a pretty equal depth, six to seven fathoms; and one of the seamen of the schooner informed me that there are but two small shoals in it, and that the anchoring ground is excellent in every part. It produces the delicate "White Fish" (*Pescado Blanco*), the *Boquinéte*, *Bagre*, and some few other kinds. The mangroves on the banks are the resort of numerous birds of the crane and heron tribes. The beautiful white egrets abound; and ducks, grebes, shags (a small species of tern), with a variety of beach birds, can from their tameness be procured with ease.

We set out late in the afternoon through a continuous and beautiful natural shrubbery for about five miles by the side of the lake, of which we occasionally obtained bright glances through fes-

toons of delicious wild *Convolvulus*. Here and there I observed rude crosses by the road side, decorated with fresh chaplets and garlands of brilliant flowers, marking the death-spot in many instances of an Indian or a Spaniard; most probably the former, from the care evinced in ornamenting these frail memorials. We passed several little embowered clusters of huts, now inhabited in peace by the remaining heroes of the island.

Several Indians and their families were passing amongst the lovely lanes between the villages, and all saluted the stranger with "Adios;" their deep brown countenances bearing that almost apathetic mildness of expression, so peculiar to the Aztec race, and so completely the reverse of their character, when sanctioned by their religious leaders they are aroused by a sense of wrongs.

We ascended by narrow, difficult and closely shaded paths to the ridge of the northern range of mountains; and it was remarkable that on our descent of the other side scarcely a tree was to be seen. A dark, rainy, windy night set in upon us while on

the plains ; but the guide, I know not how, found his way through clay and water, and brought me safely to Pomitlan, where I found my people comfortably lodged, and had a curd cheese for my supper.

September 12.—At seven we sallied forth over the swampy plain of San Luis, most prolific throughout its extent in a kind of deep, tenacious black mud, fatiguing to the mules, and not a little disagreeable to ourselves. In some places immense herds of cattle were straying, while here and there flourished fine crops of maize. In six leagues we reached the Rio Grande, which throughout the day had been at the foot of the mountains two miles on our left. Our animals having swam the stream, which was here 200 yards wide, clear of impediments, and about ten feet in depth, we passed in a rude canoe. The river issues from the Lake Chapala, near this place, and for a time flows to the northward. On the eastern banks, but divided from us by a narrow inlet, stands the small town of Ocotlan, with a large church towering as

usual above the wretched mud huts, by which it is surrounded.

In eight swampy leagues more we arrived at La Barca, (total distance S. E. by E. 14 leagues,) which was a village when in its best state, and now in ruins has been elevated to the rank of "Villa" (a town), a custom very general in Mexico: so that without good previous information, the traveller knows not if the *cities* and *towns* which he is about to visit consist of houses, streets, and a population of thousands; or are merely clusters of mud huts, inhabited by one or two hundred poor Indians. La Barca stands on the west bank of the Rio Grande, which flows past it to the lake: and I took up my quarters in one of two very wretched Mesons, which had the merit of being nearest to the river, although I should have been far better accommodated under a tree; the room apportioned to me being so full of bats, and smelling so powerfully of them, that it was impossible to remain in it. This town was once of considerable importance, and inhabited by

many wealthy families, whose half-ruined untenanted houses yet remain. In the eyes of a La Barca lady, however, with whom I had some conversation, the place was as gay and flourishing as ever. "It had two public balls every week, to which any one could be admitted; and occasional bull-fights, in one of the last of which three ladies had entered the Plaza de Toros, and distinguished themselves very highly." By her account, three Englishmen had also contributed to enliven La Barca during the Easter week by setting up a public gaming-table for fifteen days, thereby very materially impoverishing some of the people of the place. I am aware that, to the great disapprobation of their countrymen, a party of Anglo-Americans have travelled through the Republic as avowed gamesters; and therefore hope, for our national credit with the Mexicans, that these were the persons alluded to.

September 18.—My cattle were swam across the river, now about ninety yards wide owing to the dryness of the season, and the baggage with our-

selves passed in a large canoe over a sluggish stream, which at some seasons becomes perfectly impetuous, and rises so as to overflow the high steep banks and to reach the neighbouring houses. From La Barca, after two or three turns to the N. S. W., the river flows into the Lake Chapala, through which its course may be traced by the difference of colour in the waters until it issues forth at Ocotlan. As the morning dawned the scene became very interesting, from the brightness of the day, and the quantity of country-people passing the river with cattle, fruits, milk and other articles for the market; while in little distant nooks were to be seen small groups of bathing damsels, who here have the merit of not swimming quite so publicly as at many other places.

We had now entered the State of Mechoacan, of which Valladolid is the capital; and riding two leagues to the eastward, through cultivated lands and abundant swamps, reached the pretty Hacienda of Buena Vista, where at the house of the administrador, who was a friend of one of my ser-

vants, I had a very bad breakfast. Riding after this eight leagues from La Barca we reached the little scattered village of Ystlan, standing in a perfectly flat valley of two miles in width and three or four in length, hemmed in by low woody mountains. The plain is interesting, as being in some places covered by an efflorescence of muriate of soda, which forms a considerable article of commerce. The saline earth is collected into large vats, through which water is filtered, and then placed to evaporate in small well-cemented beds of about twelve feet by six. All this, however, interested me but little in comparison with the wells of boiling water, which to the amount of many hundreds are dispersed in a space of one mile and a half by a quarter of a mile in width, east and west along the plain, and sending up at intervals clouds of steam. In fact the whole surface of this place is nothing more than the crust of a volcano; and seven years back an earthquake opened a large rent in the plain, whence issued fountains of the purest water, and of mud also, both of a boiling heat.

In the evening I rambled amongst the springs, which are of all forms and sizes, from holes not larger than an inch, through which the water is seen and heard boiling beneath, to large spaces of several yards in diameter; some as transparent as though distilled. Others, within a foot of them, are turbid, or of boiling mud; and there is one called "El Pozo Verde," in which, although perfectly clear, the water is of a fine deep green. The springs are in some places constantly tranquil, and varying in temperature from 110° to 130° ; but in far the greater number the water boils up with amazing force: and in one well, chosen at random, I cooked a piece of mutton of the size of an egg in four minutes and fifty seconds. All the fountains which have been sufficiently small to admit of it, have been choked up with stones and bushes, to prevent cattle from falling into them; yet a number of poor beasts are frequently thus destroyed. It is the custom of the country-people to kill and scald their pigs at these springs, and I saw a party of Arrieros cooking their supper very comfortably over one. The stratum

through which the water rises is chiefly a calcareous earth; but on the surface, detached pieces of limestone abound, as well as porous lava of various kinds, with fragments of obsidian: with these substances there are also large spaces covered, or indeed composed of a kind of light scoriæ, abundantly filled with pieces of broken sticks and herbs in a state of petrification. The waters scarcely leave any deposit beyond a slight coating of white salt, yet they have a very perceptible smell and flavour of sulphur. The vapour appears to have no deleterious effect on the surrounding vegetation, since fine, although short, grass grows round the immediate edges of the springs; and it is very remarkable that the mimosa and other small bushes actually in many places overhang the boiling fountains, close to which their roots are situated. In some of the springs, which are frequently seen as round as wells and perforated through the solid rock, a perceptible rise and fall is observable at regular periods; but in others, the bottoms of which are choked with stones, a more remarkable phæ-

nomenon may be observed. After boiling furiously for a few minutes to the height of two feet, the water suddenly sinks; the earth gives forth a sucking sound; the base is left clear of water or even steam, and the stones in an instant become perfectly dry; so that I frequently stood on them, until warned by a low whistling sound of the returning gush, which was instantly thrown out with as much force as before.

There are some springs of inconsiderable size which have stopped entirely, and broken out afresh near the old site; and again it has occurred that a clear fountain has suddenly become muddy or the reverse, even to a perturbed one instantaneously becoming transparent.

September 14.—We left our low mud room at an early hour, riding S. E. by E. past the boiling springs, which in consequence of the coolness of the morning air appeared to give out more than ordinary smoke. As we travelled onwards, my servants informed me that a design had been laid at Ystlan to rob me while I slept, by four men,

who proposed to one of them to assist and share the booty. This man indignantly refused, but the rogues hovered round the hut all night; seeing the servants lying awake for the purpose of watching them, they had the effrontery to threaten that we should meet again on the road. I however paid no attention to this, until riding some little distance a-head, as was my custom, I observed four well-mounted and armed men drawn up in the centre of the road, and by a sign from my people knew these to be the rogues in question. They eyed my double gun as it lay across my saddle in readiness, and also saw the three men quicken their pace to join me. As soon therefore as I had passed between them, and exchanged the compliments of the morning with him who appeared to be the leader, two of the party galloped off into the thickets, and the others returned at a brisk pace towards the town, having spoken to the man who, from having served in the same regiment with one, (a notorious character,) had been asked to join them. Soon after this we came up with some pure In-

dians, who did not sufficiently understand Spanish to tell us where they were proceeding with some large frames, entirely filled with carved and painted calabashes, which they refused to sell. These people were dressed in coarse black woollen tunics striped with gray; each bore a long slender staff in his hand, and they all walked in a line with a kind of shuffling step which almost kept pace with our horses.

The road lay over cultivated plains, and here and there through thickets; when, after crossing a woody dell, we descended to a swampy plain of five miles in diameter and entirely surrounded by mountains. On the eastern side of this is situated the town of Zamora *, which we reached after weary wadings through deep morasses, and over useless little bits of causeways and bridges. I passed through the outskirts of the town without stopping; but it appeared to be a place of some consideration; has three or four large churches, and many of the inhabitants are said to be wealthy and to keep their carriages.

* Seven leagues S.W. of Ystlan.

In this place, and also in several Ranchos which we had passed, I observed that the houses had sloping roofs, the greater part of which were neatly tiled, while some few were covered with Tajamanil (or wood shingles). Hence we passed for some distance over a raised but very roughly paved causeway, through the swamp, from whence we ascended hills, where a heavy storm set in, and pelted us most unmercifully for three or four hours, until through mud and misery we reached a ruined hut* in which soap had formerly been manufactured, although there were few signs of that material having ever been used by the inmates. Here we procured a sheltered corner, amidst smoke, filth, and two of the most wretchedly miserable families I ever saw, who, though almost starving and having nothing to guard, maintained seven meagre and barking dogs, and a more persecuting army of fleas than had ever before tormented me. A poor man here was crippled in a most extraordinary way, having lost by some species of

* Having travelled from Zamora five leagues S.E.

decay nearly all his toes and fingers, and the few remaining ones had every appearance of speedily falling off also. Except being thin from want of proper sustenance, he was to all appearance healthy, and could not in any way account for this infirmity, which had attacked him after he had arrived at manhood.

September 15.—I was rejoiced when daylight allowed me to escape from the hut; and wading over an uneven grassy country, we passed at two miles to the right of the little town of Tlasasalco, whence Purupéro, a small Indian village, is distant about one mile on the other side of the road, and hidden by the trees. Our way now lay through the gorges of woody mountains, amongst which every opportunity had been taken of cultivating the land for maize. Occasionally we passed a solitary hut, and several crosses and cairns marked the path of Revolutionary war. Riding through a portion of the mountains covered with pines, we arrived at 4 P. M. * at Cipiméo, a small Hacienda with a neat

* Having come E.S.E. thirteen leagues.

new Meson; but neither here nor in the cottages round could we procure one single thing to eat: and it is a remarkable circumstance, that in this country, overrun as it is by thousands of fine cattle and sheep, not one Rancho hut in ten possesses an ounce of meat, either fresh or dried. Looking out of my window, I was witness to an infantine amusement which would rather startle English mothers and nurses. A party of little children were diverting themselves with a large rattle-snake, which in all its vigour was tied by the middle to the lash of a small whip, while the delighted urchins were teasing it with pieces of stick, which they presented to be bitten. Being a novice to this species of fun, and not liking the angry rattles or savage springs of the reptile, I asked the merry little group to kill it; but my proposition was in vain, and they ran off to enjoy their dangerous plaything uninterrupted.

Cipiméo and its neighbourhood had been the scene of some important battles during the Revolutionary war, at which period the Hacienda was

rich and extensive. General Negrete and the Spanish troops made it their head-quarters, but during their stay the house was mined by the Insurgents, and the time appointed when it was to be sprung; a woman, however, discovered to the general his danger, and the place was abandoned: but Padre Torres, the priest, the most bloody of all the Revolutionary leaders, in revenge for the escape of his prey levelled the Hacienda to the ground.

September 16.—Leaving Cipiméo early in the morning, we rode into delightful shrubberies in a small wild Barranca, where the little river Cipiméo, which rises in a neighbouring swamp, was tumbling in a beautiful cascade of thirty or forty feet, amidst rocks and trees. On fording the transparent stream, we found all the inhabitants as well as curs of a few huts in loud pursuit of a mad dog, which gave them a fine chase; and after a shower of blows from sticks and stones the wretched animal escaped into the wilderness. This was the first time I had heard of the

existence of hydrophobia in Mexico, where it is called *el Mal* ; but one of my people very gravely informed me that all danger from a bite might be avoided by the simple process of burying the unfortunate dog under a Fresnillo or ash-tree ! From the ford we rode over a perfectly level plain, alternately dry and swampy, E. by S. six leagues. Fine mountains hemmed it in on either side at about three leagues apart, and thousands of brood mares and cattle covered the surface of the “Llano del Quatro,” while its borders were dotted with Ranchos and Haciendas. The quantities of orioles were at this place quite extraordinary, following and feeding amongst the cattle, on whose backs they perched in great numbers with the most perfect familiarity. When disturbed, their flocks darkened the air ; and some idea may be formed of their abundance, from the fact, that with one discharge of my fowling-piece I killed enough to fill a pocket-handkerchief. There were three varieties of these creatures ; one perfectly black, another having a yellowish head and neck, and the third

bearing a bright yellow spot on the first joint of the wing ; but all associated in common, and possibly may have been the same species in various stages of age and plumage. Crossing a small hill we breakfasted under the shade of some bushes near a hut, where we procured an abundant supply of whey, for which the Ranchera refused any payment, saying that “ she sold nothing to travellers, but gave what little she possessed with pleasure.” I could have embraced the old woman as the first and only person in Mexico whom I ever knew to refuse money. Travelling four leagues we arrived at the Hacienda Téchacho, a pretty retired little spot, traversed by some small rapid streams. Here, in a paved circle, several horses were treading out the wheat, to be ground in a small water-mill. I made a drawing of the process, which was very neat and simple. In five leagues further to the S. E. we reached the Rancho of Teristerān, where we put up under the eaves of a hut, and procured but indifferent fare, for which our hosts, although comparatively wealthy, charged exorbitantly.

Sept. 17.—On the morning of the 17th the women of the family pestered me in addition for rings and trinkets, “as the English,” they said, “although not Christianos, have always things to give away.” Our road now lay amongst the woody dells of the mountains, in one of which a long natural fissure was pointed out to me, as the road by which the Indians of the ancient city of Tsinsunsan, a day’s journey to our right, “were accustomed before the Conquest to carry provisions for the table of Montezuma with such expedition, from hand to hand, that on arriving at Mexico they were still warm!” The distance is nearly 100 leagues, which to the country-people, who delight in the marvellous, renders the story the more orthodox in proportion to its impossibility. This city of Tsinsunsan, was once of considerable extent, and the residence of the king Calsouzi, who was an ally of Cortez, and assisted with his Chichimecos in the subjugation of Mexico. The palace of this monarch and other interesting remains are still to be seen on the borders of the

lake of Pascuaro, which is of considerable size, and in many respects well worthy of a visit; but as I travelled not on my own account, I did not feel myself authorized to make it.

The Indians in Tsinsunsan are still unmixed in blood with their conquerors, and the Zaresco language is the only one spoken by the greater part of them. In the lake, the Pescado Blanco, so deservedly celebrated, is caught in great abundance, and near its borders are situated some rich lodes of copper. In six leagues amongst the hills we reached a plain, and entered the city of Valladolid*, having traversed a well-built causeway and some small bridges across an extensive morass. I had considerable difficulty in passing my baggage at the Guarita, owing to the impudence of the people in charge of it, who had acquired just sufficient of our "vulgar tongue" from English or American travellers to be very saucy and familiar.

I was much struck, on entering Valladolid, by

* About east from Teristerān.

the width and airy appearance of its streets, the goodness of the houses, and its magnificent cathedral ; and I put up at a very large and superior messon, with clean, spacious, and newly painted rooms. I was, however, much annoyed by constant tappings at my door, more or less loud according to the imagined merits of the case, by herds of beggars, who in the name of the Blessed Virgin, or Our Lady of Guadalupe, implored charity. In the evening I visited the Alameda and Paséo, both on the eastern side of the town. The first is a straight broad walk, paved with flat slabs and bounded on either side by low stone walls and benches, overshadowed by rows of fine trees, whose branches frequently joined in the centre. By the side of this runs a portion of the Paséo, which is a road of sufficient width for two carriages, and extending about a mile to the southward, branching off into shady lanes leading to various parts of the southern suburbs. These walks, or drives, are exceedingly pretty ; and the effect of the entrance to the Alameda is heightened by being crossed by a portion

of a fine aqueduct of excellent masonry, on light ornamental arches, which, including a branch from the main course, extend about a mile to the foot of a hill eastward of the city.

As it was Sunday, all the gay people were in their best clothes, and rambling in the public walks, amongst which, clumsy heavy carriages driven by dirty ragged postillions were rolling, laden with ladies in court-dresses and plumes of feathers. All were smoking, and eating alternately, between their puffs of genuine Orizaba, cakes and painted sugar-plums, which two or three dirty old Leperos were carrying in baskets on their heads for sale.

Returning from the walk, I passed a house from whence issued so much noise and such a jingling of dollars that I was induced to enter, and found a motley group in a spacious cockpit, paying their debts of honour over two dead birds. I passed round the pit, which was crowded by a set of cut-throat looking fellows, in blankets and rags. Here pulque, the juice of the tuna, and fiery mescal, were selling in great quantities, to the evident be-

wilderment of some of the gentlemen sportsmen, of whom many were lying drunk and asleep upon the benches, while others were sitting or rolling about with their eyes starting from the sockets, and in a happy state of uncertainty as to whether they should sleep or quarrel. I was pleased, however, to find amidst all the noise and confusion, that although my dress marked me as a stranger, not an insulting word was said to me, but on the contrary some of the most tipsy of the party pulled off their hats. I note this apparently trifling circumstance, as affording so strong a contrast with the reception of strangers at Zacatecas, and as tracing on my approach to the capital the diminution of those prejudices which are rather cherished than suppressed in the Northern States.

At night-fall a very severe storm of thunder and lightning burst over the centre of the city; rain and hail came down in torrents, and the forked lightning was more than usually vivid. During this war of elements, a boy was sent to the tower of the cathedral, to toll as rapidly as possible the

great bell, which, having been expressly blessed for this kind of service, (as a learned priest informed me at the time,) has the virtue of calming all tempests;—a fact I can bear witness to; since at the expiration of three stormy hours, during which the tolling was hurried and incessant, the clouds dispersed, and the sky, cleared of its load, became as bright and starry as if nothing had happened.

September 18.—I waited with a letter of introduction on Don Pascual de Alsua, brother-in-law of Iturbide, who was a native of Valladolid, and whose relations still live here. The town's-people were at this time generally supposed to be attached to the party of the late Emperor; but they are now, and as far as I could observe, justly, considered to be amongst the most peaceable people of the Republic, although during the war their excesses and cruelties towards the Spaniards were notorious.

The city of Valladolid pleased me more than any I had hitherto seen *. It has indeed but one

* This opinion I carried through the country with me, excepting only Xalapa, which from various dissimilarities cannot

principal street ; but this is broad, clean, and cheerful ; so that a stranger escapes all the filth, misery and crowds, with which most other Mexican towns abound.

The Plaza is remarkable as having broad piazzas on three of its sides, and the fine cathedral isolated from all other buildings bounding it on the east. A crowded market is held here, and the venders display their goods, as is the general custom, beneath the shade of rude mat umbrellas. Fruits and vegetables are tolerably abundant ; and amongst other luxuries, the *pescado blanco* (or white-fish) is brought from the lake of Pascuaro. The night market on the Sunday is extremely pretty ; each little shop having a bright blazing pile of the fragrant *Ocote* (red pine) in its front, so that from an elevated window the scene is very lively and peculiar. All the houses of Valladolid have flat roofs, the same as in Old Spain, with long water-spouts

be fairly advanced as a comparison with it ; being a retired comfortable-looking place, of quite a different character from a city.

projecting most incommo*di*ously over the streets. On many of the terraces a fine crop of grasses and mosses was flourishing so luxuriantly, that I am astonished at the natives not having taken so good a hint for making little gardens on their roofs, which would give a fresh and lively appearance to the city.

The cathedral is a fine building, and although crowded with ornaments, these are arranged with great taste. The choir is remarkably beautiful, and the organ, which is small and placed on one side within the screen, has a fine ornamental veil or facing, of a richly carved unpainted red wood. From the choir to the grand altar is a broad walk inclosed by pillars and a ballustrade of silver, surmounted by statues of the same metal. On either side is placed a pulpit, cased with its stairs in richly embossed silver, said to have been procured from the mine of San Pedro del Barreno at Ozumatlan. However great the quantity may even now appear, it is but half of what ornamented the church before

the Revolution, during which the generals of both parties robbed this temple with very little scruple, of a commodity so conveniently made to their hands. The grand altar is dazzling with pure gold and silver, so disposed as to have a rich, without a tawdry effect. All the plate indeed in this church possesses a merit rarely seen in others; that of being clean and well polished, so as to look like what it really is, instead of resembling dirty pewter, the general hue of Mexican church ornaments composed of this valuable metal.

There are several other churches at Valladolid, two nunneries, and four monasteries, all very much alike. In the chancel of one are statues of The Saviour on the cross, attended by Joseph and Mary gorgeously apparelled and as large as life, flanked by the two crucified thieves, who with Indian features and hair are clothed in open-knee'd breeches of bright striped stuff, with white frilled drawers peeping from beneath; the Indian costume in the present day.

The population of the city is said to be 15,000.

In addition to which, is one regiment of cavalry, the soldiers enveloped in capacious jackets and trousers, all of one size, and wearing round hats, incircled by a broad tin band having the number of the regiment displayed above it on a round plate of the same material. The poor fellows, who as Vaqueros would be active and warlike, seemed sufficiently wretched in their new trappings and European stirrups and accoutrements, with which they can scarcely sit their horses. There is also selected from the inhabitants a "Milicia Activa" of 1500 men. The town has on the eastern side some show of fortifications, and its approach from the west is naturally defended by the extensive swamp. In my rambles I greatly enjoyed the ices, which are very good here, the frozen snow being procured from the mountain of San Andres, which lies to the westward, and from its winter cap supplies all the ice-houses.

September 19.—We set out early in the morning for the mine of Ozumatlan, but suffered another provoking detention at the Guarita or Custom-

house guard; in addition to which, one of my best cargo mules which had injured its spine by a fall, became quite unable to proceed further; I therefore gave it to a poor Indian, who promised to take care of, and endeavour its cure. Riding E. by S. five leagues, we reached Charo, a small village with a large church; and thence, in four leagues further, arrived at the Pueblo of Yndaparápeo, in which, as in the former one, all the houses had sloping roofs, and were covered with wood shingles of a good length and breadth. Here, under one of the broad projecting eaves, a large party of women were assembled, having boiled camotes (the sweet potatoe), tunas and apples, piled in little heaps before them; while large earthen jars of pulque, of all palatable degrees of strength or sweetness, were ranged by their sides. As we approached the group, they all hastily poured samples into their little gourd bowls, and crowded anxiously round us, to learn whose jar was the most to our taste. I drank of the sweet sort, my people of the strong; and all were satisfied: though one fellow, an old

soldier, very roguishly drank off all the samples before he would give an opinion. Proceeding two miles further in the same direction, we turned off to the S. E., and ascended the intricate mountain paths, which in four or five leagues became so numerous, that we lost our way and rambled about for three hours, until we found a guide to show us how to cross the Barrancas. At length in two leagues more we entered a deep dell, between steep woody mountains, up which we proceeded south, three or four miles, when after dark and thoroughly wetted by heavy rain we reached the mine and miserable little village of Ozumatlan.

Before entering the glen, I had seen from the mountains the large lake or plain of Araron, lying about four miles to the northward, from whence a very fine salt is procured as an efflorescence, and there are also said to be some boiling springs resembling those of Ystlan.

September 20.—On the morning after my arrival I walked in a heavy rain amongst the woods in the mountains to visit the shafts of the old mines, and

in the evening entered the Socabon, which running 500 yards into the base of the mountain now cuts a very rich vein of ore.

September 21.—The rain continued without intermission until the following morning, when after a cessation of two or three hours it returned with redoubled force. The dampness and cold of the atmosphere at this season is exceedingly unpleasant, and what we in England so well understand by “raw weather” would give a good idea of the climate of Ozumatlan during the rains, which continue four or five months.

In the evening I waded to the priest, whom I found living in patriarchal simplicity in a mud hut. A pig lay sleeping on the threshold; a lepero was stretched at full length on the clay floor; and an old woman was snoring on a bed in one corner, while the Padre himself was taking his siesta on another. The good man appeared to be of half Indian blood, was mild and gentle in his manners, and troubled himself but little about any other worldly concerns, beyond the care of his simple

parishioners. He was well acquainted with the neighbouring mines, and gave me some interesting information about them under a heavy cloud of tobacco smoke, which "kept him alive in this wet weather."

September 22.—In the forenoon, I squeezed myself through the extraordinary socabon of San Pedro (old), which by a narrow and tortuous course was driven many years since, and for a time effected the partial drainage of that mine; and afterwards made a hurried sketch of the village from beneath my umbrella. Ozumatlan is situated in a very deep narrow Barranca, between abrupt and almost precipitous mountains, which are clothed to their summits with fine firs, oaks, and various other timber trees. I had no barometer with which to ascertain its elevation; but from the nature of the country, the lowness of its temperature at this season, and the fact of the mountains being generally enveloped in heavy clouds, I should conceive it to be nearly 8000 feet above the level of the sea.

To the southward on crossing the mountains

for three or four leagues is a descent to the Tierra Caliente, from whence fruits and vegetables are brought to the village market. The direction of the ravine, which is filled with little short turnings amidst a thick and beautiful shrubbery, is about north and south, for three or four miles. Its width is entirely occupied by the path-way, and a rapid mountain torrent, supplied in all directions by innumerable little rills. From the narrowness of the valley there is scarcely a flat space to be found for cultivation, and two or three apple orchards, with here and there a very small spot of maize, is all the husbandry which appears. Amongst the shrubs the American-hawthorn is here very abundant, and its beautiful apple-shaped fruit (excellent when preserved) absolutely covers the trees with its brilliant clusters, resembling the Siberian-crab in size and colour.

The mountains produce the red and white pine, the spruce, larches, cedars, the roblé and encino (oaks), beefwood, and, according to the natives, ebony; also the plane-tree, mimosa, and an infinite

variety of trees and shrubs, of which many are very beautiful, but which I have not the science to enumerate. The red pine is of two kinds; from one the Ocote (or candle-wood) is procured, the other furnishes the Tajamanil (or thin wood shingles) which are used in roofing houses and huts. The village is situated in the only flat open space which could receive it with its church; and scattered little huts are perched here and there, amongst the close thickets on the mountain's brow. The air of discomfort of this little spot in the rainy season is very striking; but I am told that in the summer it becomes far more agreeable, although very sultry. The huts are merely composed of stakes driven closely together into the ground, or walls of sun-dried bricks, which are called "Adobe;" above these the roof, supported by props in many instances entirely independent of the walls, is thatched by shingles of fir, a yard in length and four inches wide. These are generally laid with some regularity, so as to keep out the heavy rains; and besides being tightly pegged down

to their supporting beams, are retained in their places by some dozen large stones ranged upon them at short distances. Pigs, dogs and people, live huddled together in the utmost harmony, in these confined spaces; and all—for the honour of dirt be it spoken—have the same appearance of health and perfect contentment. The population at this period might amount to about four hundred souls, over whom reign without opposition an Alcalde and the Padre. The church, which was once good, is large; the walls not having suffered when the Spaniards in the late war sacked and burnt it and great part of the village, in revenge for not having found the natives so rich as a vicinage to Ozumatlan might be supposed to have made them.

The people are quiet and orderly at this place; and if no evil-disposed person gets amongst them, will be aware of the advantages which must accrue from Englishmen settling amongst them and working the mines. The intellect of the rising generation is not entirely neglected, for under the sheltering eaves of a cottage I two or three times ob-

served about half a dozen boys and one solitary girl, sitting on a log, and roaring out their respective lessons to a schoolmaster, who at the same time was reading aloud. It is indeed a singular but almost universal custom in this country, that in all the schools, every child is to be heard screaming out its task at the same moment; and, as the teacher usually walks about while all this is going forward, and is apparently very little interested in the business, I cannot at all conceive how his scholars ever contrive to learn to read.

In all that I could observe of the poor natives of the place, there is, by their perfect exclusion from the world, a simplicity and quietness of manners which might be turned to the best purposes by the foreigners who settle amongst them; and I could not help picturing to myself, a number of little plans for their comfort and convenience, the execution of which would lighten the extreme solitude in which the directing English agent must necessarily live.

I know not a place so buried amongst the wild

woody glens, as Ozumatlan;—the most extensive view is from one side of the narrow Barranca to the other; and the general silence is broken only by the harsh rattling of the turbulent little stream, which rushes past the residence of the English, and through the centre of the village.

The mineral riches all lie amongst the mountains which form the eastern side of the Barranca, in the mines of “Los Apostoles,” “La Machora,” and “San Pedro del Barreno,” now the property of the Real del Monte company. To the south of these is the mine of La Piedad, worked by the administrador of an European Spaniard; and on the east is that of La Purissima, occupied by a company of natives. To the north lies the mine of San José de Gracia, the property of a gentleman in Valladolid.

Sept. 23.—Attended by one of my servants in a high fever, and suffering greatly from rheumatism myself, owing to the chilling damps of the valley, we set out at an early hour up the eastern range of mountains, as I purposed visiting the mines of

Flalpuxahua on my way to Mexico; I therefore avoided the northern road from the valley, which in four leagues brings the traveller to Cinapécuaro, a neat town near which are said to exist a mountain abounding in obsidian, and some boiling sulphureous springs. Our road up the mountain was by a very difficult path amongst the woods; and descending by one quite as bad, we rode ten leagues through thick forests of firs* and oaks†.

We now came to a cultivated plain, over which for six leagues a heavy rain accompanied us; and of two horses which sunk in a bog, one was extricated with great difficulty. At sunset we reached the little town of Tajimaróa, and put up at a ruined "cuartel" for soldiers. Our route had been E. S. E. sixteen leagues, and was very comfortless, without much to interest me except a party of Indian women whom we met while the sun was strong,

* One of these which lay on the ground was twelve feet in girth and ninety in length.

† Many of the oaks were fifteen feet in girth, carrying up a straight stem without a single branch, for forty or fifty feet.

and who sold us some cool ripe peaches and tunas. In the woods we saw three different holes, which had recently been opened, at the foot of remarkable trees or rocks, where money had been buried at the time of the disturbances.

Sept. 24.—My feverish servant, owing to two copious bleedings I gave him, being now quite unable to go forward, I settled every thing for his comfort, and left him one of my horses on which to find his way home after his recovery.

This being Sunday, the market-place or square was crowded with Indians in their best clothes, and carrying large bunches of flowers in their hands, or wreathed into the women's hair. It is believed that one of the great incitements to the Indian war at Chapala, originated at Tajimaróá, where for some trifling offence a Spanish officer had caused the Alcalde of one of the tribes to be flogged round the Plaza.—On setting out we found the broad level road crowded for a time with Indians from the village of Arimbo, which we passed in two leagues to the eastward.

Three miles to the S. E. of Tajimaróa is the Indian village of Tuspan, the last in the state of Mechoacan or Valladolid, so that we had now entered on that of Mexico. On our journey we passed an immense concourse of people bearing a large covered picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe across the plains to its proper church, whence it had been lent to hallow a mass in a distant village. Four horsemen preceded this holy painting, and all the Indian women bore large bunches of flowers in honour of this their favourite saint. Scarcely was the procession out of our sight, before the rain came down in torrents, accompanied by heavy thunder and lightning. To add to this, we now entered on, and rode for eight leagues through, clayey roads flooded up to the knees of our cattle, and it was not until after dark that we reached the mining Real of Tlalpuxahua; there, thoroughly soaked after a ride of eleven hours, we found the Meson full of travellers, and at last, as an act of charity, were received into a hut, of which a poor woman recently confined occupied one corner.

Sept. 25.—I this morning waited on the Chevalier de Rivafinole, director of the Tlalpuxahua mines, who very obligingly insisted on my passing the day with him and visiting all the operations, after I should have witnessed the performance of a ceremony which was quite new to me. It was the public blessing of a mine, “El Tajo,” then about to be cleared of water. For this purpose the Padre, attended by a great concourse of spectators, assembled under the large new Galera or shed, which was erected over the shaft and malacate, and prettily ornamented with green boughs, flowers, shawls, handkerchiefs, and tinsel, while three show horses gaudily harnessed and attired stood near the malacate. At a small temporary altar adjoining the mouth of the shaft, the Padre put on his canonicals, when attended by two godfathers, who stood near him with lighted tapers, he read a blessing on the undertaking, at the same time sprinkling holy water where that element was already but too abundant. He then with great solemnity blessed the malacate, the show horses, and

the stables; after which the first Botas, or skins of water, were drawn from the mine; while hundreds of hand-rockets were let off in all directions, and wine, cakes, and rewards to the workmen were distributed. After this ceremony I visited a small steam-engine, nearly completed, over the mine of Malduermes, and once the property of Mr. Wilcox, at Temascaltepec. The mines of Ocote, the ores of which are excellent, and those of Las Virgines, also very good, were the next I visited. At the mine of Los Santos Martyres I observed a good promise of gold and silver ores, and brought away some fine specimens. On the whole I saw about twenty mines covered with extensive and well built Galeras: every thing appeared in active progress, and promising. I also went to a new Hacienda whose Patio was covered with tortas of ore, and one more ancient, with several more in progress. Here I found the produce of seven cargas of Pepena from Ocote, forming into Cuerpos to the amount of thirty-four marks and a half. The process of amalgamation is here four, five, or even

six weeks, for which I cannot at all account, as the average temperature of Zacatecas is lower; yet from eleven to fourteen days there, at this season, are generally sufficient. The miners here are Germans, and their chief, Mr. Burckhardt, is a man of science and talent. Tlalpuxahua lies deeply embosomed amidst richly wooded mountains, frequently intersected by deep ravines, and is traversed by a small river which goes by the same name. From hence a great command of water can be obtained at all seasons, and the stamps and other machinery are now worked by its power, which might yet be more generally and effectively used. The mercury stood in a barometer by Carey, according to Mr. Burckhardt's observations, at 22·470 inches. The thermometer being at 15·6 Centigrade. The town is built without any regularity, but contains several large and very good houses, two churches, a chapel, and two mesons: the people are well-behaved and quiet, and the place is certainly one of the most desirable mining residences I have seen. A letter from Mr. Rivafi-

nole introduced me to Mr. Walkinshaw, the gentleman in direction of the mines of El Oro, about two leagues to the N. E. of Talpuxahua on the opposite side of a finely wooded Cerro. El Oro, the property of the United Mexican Company, has a wretched little village round it, and the mines are still very backward, although that of San José Coronado has lately sent up some tolerable stones of ore. Its depth is 150 yards, and two malacates were at work on it for the *Desague* and produce. The mines of El Oro were formerly productive, and a carga of twelve arobas (three hundred pounds) was once sold at the shaft mouth of the mine of Zapateros, for 11,000 dollars.

I had often heard of an animal named Zorillo, a kind of pole-cat, which is abundant in some parts of Mexico, and wished much to experience the effects of the pungent odour it has the power of emitting when pursued. In Mr. Walkinshaw's house my curiosity was more than satisfied, his dogs having recently killed one of these creatures. They were in consequence so impregnated with its smell, as

to communicate it wherever they went, and with such strength as to cause a severe pain in the head. I know not how to describe this peculiar odour ; but it is worse than any thing I ever experienced or could have imagined. The animal, as far as I could judge from its mutilated carcase, is the size of a very young badger, and much resembling that animal in the disposition of its colours. It is said to be slow and inactive ; but until my sense of taste or smell should fail me, I never could have the hardihood to chase it. From El Oro Mr. Walkinshaw obligingly accompanied me part of my way through beautiful woods, interspersed with lovely dells and plains. Here and there we saw groups of fine half-wild cattle, and the blue jays and scarlet-headed woodpeckers were very numerous amidst the magnificent firs and oaks. I rode four leagues through this charming scenery, and four more over clear well-cultivated ground, covered with crops of maize and barley. Having made eight leagues E. S. E. from El Oro, I arrived at the large castle-like Hacienda of Tepetit-

lan, where even for money I could not procure a morsel of food; but my people found their way into the kitchen of the ladies who own the estate, and obtained a little piece of beef for a very hungry caballero. We were lodged in two small rooms built against the Hacienda wall, and dignified by the name of Meson.

Sept. 27 (thermometer 5 A.M. 54° , 2 P.M. 70°). —I set out very early this morning with one man, sending the cargoes by another route to Toluca; it being my purpose if possible, to ascend the remarkable mountain and extinguished volcano which lies to the southward of the city. Riding E. S. E. about six leagues along the northern foot of a range of high hills, and having a cultivated plain on our left, we afterwards cut across the country in a S. E. direction, and with the *Volcan* for our guide passed for six leagues over arid plains deeply furrowed with abrupt gulleys and fissures. On the only cultivated spot, at a cottage door I saw the stuffed skin of a lamb, having one head, four ears, two of which were liver-coloured,

a very thick neck, and two perfectly distinct bodies, each having its legs properly formed and placed. I tried in vain to purchase this little monster, but its owners valued it too highly to part with it. From the rugged plain we rounded some low hills, and in three leagues to the eastward entered the city of Toluca, where I obtained an indescribably dirty room and very bad stabling, at the Meson de la Plaza. The mountain proved to be at least ten miles to the southward of the town: it was covered by heavy clouds, so that nothing could have been seen from it; and as I had already ridden ten hours, and was far from being well, I decided on not even attempting to visit it on the morrow, much as I wished to have seen the large lake which fills the crater to a considerable height, and is surrounded by cliffs of above a thousand feet in height. The summit of the mountain, according to Mr. Burckhardt, is at an elevation of about 15,400 feet above the sea. During the greater part of the year it is capped with snow, of which a considerable portion still remained.

Sept. 28.—Toluca is a large and important city, and is situated at the foot of two steep barren hills. To the southward is an extensive and picturesque plain, covered with rich crops of grain and enlivened by numerous neat Haciendas, with their pretty churches rising above the bright green harvest. The volcano is, as I have already said, ten miles to the south; and beyond it and the ridge of adjacent mountains are the fertile plains of Quotlamilpas, where the sugar-cane is abundantly cultivated. The city at the time of my visit was all bustle and confusion, owing to its being the electioneering head-quarters, for the naming of deputies to the Congress of the free and *sovereign* State of Mexico*. The eventful day was close at hand, and the distribution of pamphlets and inflammatory papers, for or against certain parties, was going forward with as much rancour and violent feeling as is usual in some parts of the Old World. The voters

* Commonly called in the capital *el Congresito*, or the little Congress, to distinguish it from the General Congress of the Republic.

had crowded in from all parts of the country ; and in order to keep these genuine sons of freedom within proper bounds, a large body of troops had been marched in from Mexico, parties of whom constantly paraded the streets. All the mesons, with the exception of the one I lodged in, which also sheltered a host of voters, were filled with these warriors. I can scarcely venture to dwell on the extreme dirtiness of this inn : the stairs were almost impassable ; and the galleries crowded with beggars, and maimed miserable objects. Fodder for cattle was scarcely to be procured ; and as for man's provision, it was only to be obtained from sundry old women who sat frying savoury messes in the streets. I was too unwell to ramble through the city ; but its Plaza and those streets through which I passed were airy and handsome. I left the place in the afternoon, by a straight shady causeway extending a mile to the eastward ; and riding four leagues in the same direction, arrived towards sunset at the little town of Lerma, which had been in sight, in perspective, the whole

length of the broad straight road. This place is surrounded by an extensive morass traversed by fine raised causeways: and hence rises the Rio Grande, which under various names finds its way to the Pacific Ocean, near San Blas. The pools of water are here beautifully transparent, and the tall reeds with which the swamp is filled are the resort of a great variety of water-fowl, amongst which I counted in a very small space thirty-nine white egrets. On entering the town I was stopped by some odd-looking dragoons, who insisted on taking away my arms from me, as I came unprovided with a permit, to take care of my safety:—an admirable piece of justice towards robbers, who are rarely punished if taken; and by the kindness of a parental government, which prohibits travellers carrying weapons, their professional risk is considerably diminished. In candour, however, I must say that the laws of the state of Mexico are in many cases put in force: but in the northern provinces, where no crimes are punished, the edicts respecting arms are in the highest degree encou-

raging to the "Knights of Industry." I trembled for the safety of my weapons, if left in the hands of so respectable a body of troopers as those who now surrounded me; but happily thought of demanding a receipt from the officer, who fortunately could not write. I finally escaped, by his saying my arms would be taken from me at the other barrier when I quitted the town. I lodged at a small dirty meson; and being still unwell, retired early to sleep, when I was aroused by an indignant Ranchero, who had been stopped the same time as myself for carrying a sword. He now brought me a "permit" from the Alcalde, to whom he had voluntarily become my bail for good behaviour; declaring that he knew me well, and giving a list of my marks, age, and other particulars to be inserted in the pass. This, however, would have been of little avail, if strictly examined; as my friend having only seen me for a few minutes on horseback and wrapped in a cloak, had given the most erroneous description imaginable of my person.

Sept. 29.—I set out with this worthy Ranchero

early in the morning for Mexico; and on leaving the town passed a rude kind of turnpike-gate, where we paid toll at the rate of a real for each laden beast and a medio for every loose one. This tax is exacted for the express purpose of keeping the road between Lerma and Mexico in repair: but had parties of men been employed to destroy this once magnificent military causeway, they could scarcely have made it worse than it is in many places; and not an effort seems to have been made to prevent its becoming equally bad throughout. We soon ascended the mountains, and travelled through delicious forest scenery, where firs, cedars and oaks, were growing with a freshness I had never seen excelled. Groups of market Indians, travellers, and laden mules, with now and then a lumbering coach drawn by eight mules, gave animation to the roads, and at the same time a hint of our approach to the populous capital. About midway between Lerma and Mexico is a small clear space in a woody defile, distinguished by the name of "Las Cruces," and marked by

several rude crosses, some of which are now falling into decay, while others yet bore the remains of faded wreaths of rushes or flowers. These frail memorials point out the site of one of the first and most sanguinary of the Revolutionary battles between the Cura Hidalgo and the Spanish general Truxillo, in which the latter was totally defeated with great slaughter. The scene elsewhere was enlivened by abundance of little wooden huts, scattered here and there along the road side, with their only room embellished by shelves bearing rows of glittering bottles of the fiery deleterious brandies of the mescal and sugar-cane. Jars too of foaming pulque stood clustered in shady corners, inviting weary muleteers to refresh themselves previous to their entering the "Great City of the Lake." From an eminence we came suddenly in sight of the great valley of Mexico, with its beautiful city appearing in the centre, surrounded by diverging shady Paséos, bright fields, and picturesque Haciendas. The great lake of Tescuco lay immediately beyond it, shaded by a

low floating cloud of exhalations from its surface, which hid from our view the bases of the volcanos of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl; while their snowy summits, brightly glowing beneath the direct rays of the sun which but partially illumined the plains, gave a delightfully novel appearance to the whole scene before me. I was however, at this distance, disappointed as to the size of Mexico; but its lively whiteness and freedom from smoke, the magnitude of the churches, and the extreme regularity of its structure, gave it an appearance which can never be seen in a European city, and declare it unique, perhaps unequalled of its kind. We reached it after riding twelve leagues from Lerma, and passing on the last descent through the village of Tacubaya, entered by the side of an aqueduct extending a mile in length, bounded on either side by a shady road raised above the surrounding marshy ground.

CHAPTER IX.

Entrance to Mexico—Beggars—Theatre—Paseo de las Vigas—Environs—Palace of Chapultepec, the site of Montezuma's Palace—Nuestra Señora de los Remedios—Universidad—Botanic Garden—Senate—The Portales—Plaza—Markets.

AT the outer barrier the Custom-house searchers were more strict than I had ever before found them; and not even a box the size of my hand escaped being opened and examined, although I had all the required passports. I at last created great amusement for the by-standers, who on these occasions are very numerous, by reminding the pompous man of office that he had forgotten to look at the inside of my watch, which I opened for his inspection. After a delay of nearly two hours I was permitted to reload and proceed; and at length found my way to the Calle Balbanera, where I put up at a meson of the same name, and about on a par with that of Toluca, but considered

one of the best in Mexico. Here in a moment my room was crowded by pedlars and importunate beggars, armed with an irresistible claim to charity in the name of the Protectress of Mexico, Our Blessed Lady of Guadalupe. Being hungry, and my hotel furnishing me with nothing but water, a chair, and a rickety table, I sent a servant to an eating-house to procure a dinner for me. It came at length in the shape of two square bits of dry tough mutton fried in pig's fat, and placed in a large dish of coarse brown crockery, which would have contained fifty more such morsels. About an ounce of mashed cabbage sprinkled with hard yellow pease, and a bowl of "Caldo" (literally hot greasy water, called broth) accompanied my meat; and a green chili and a piece of bread completed my repast. I was also furnished with a fork, but no knife; the latter is seldom supplied. I paid as much as if my dinner had been composed of the greatest delicacies; and a boy who attended demanded, and of course received, a present for the expedition and cleanliness with which I had been served.

Somewhat refreshed by this sorry meal, I waited on Mr. Exter, agent for the Bolaños Company, who very obligingly offered me a room in his house; but this I declined, as it would have greatly inconvenienced him. I promised, however, to become his guest during the day. At night, after having enjoyed a very comfortable warm bath, I accompanied him to the theatre, which, although small, is neatly fitted up: yet there is a great defect in it, being so long and narrow that the voices of the performers are scarcely audible in the centre boxes; this, however, I soon found to be of very little consequence, the play itself being the very last thing attended to. The better part of the audience hire the boxes and the greater portion of the pit for the season, and attend every night in order to hold Tertulias, to talk, and to visit each other. The piece represented this evening was "*La Italiana en Argel*," and was well performed; some of the actors, old Spaniards, singing with much taste. The audience were quiet and well dressed, and although a light cloud

might here and there be seen to rise above the pit, or float in eddies from the gallery, I did not see one of the well-dressed ladies in the boxes indulging in the favourite and fragrant weed.

Sept. 30.—I rode out early in the forenoon with Mr. Exter by the charming Paséo of Las Vigas, which has on its left the canal leading from the Lake Chalco, alive with busy Indians pushing forward their laden canoes to the Mexican market: many of them were piled to a great height with vegetables, fruits, green forage for horses, wood, and crockery-ware: but I confess I looked in vain for the Arcadian groups which Mr. Bullock describes with his pen, and which his son has painted. On the opposite side of the crowded little stream are the Chinampas, which some people yet designate as Floating Gardens. These are long narrow strips of ground redeemed from the surrounding swamp, and intersected by small canals. They all appeared to abound in very fine vegetables, and lively foliaged poplars generally shadowed their extremities. The little gardens constructed on bushes or wooden rafts

no longer exist in the immediate vicinity of Mexico; but I learnt that some may yet be seen at Juchimilco, a place near San Augustin de las Cuévas. The Custom-house is placed at the entrance of the canal as it flows from Chalco to Mexico; and the revenues paid into it are said to be greater than those of any other place in the Republic, the market canoes being very carefully registered, and although not heavily taxed, their numbers with the quantity of articles they bring, contribute to make the returns very considerable. We rode at some distance on the southern side of the city across or along all the principal *Paséos*, which are numerous, broad, and finely shaded by double rows of trees. At length we reached Tacubaya, where I had entered, lying at a short distance to the westward, and visited the uninhabited palace of the bishop, which was undergoing a slovenly kind of repair for the reception of the Deputies from Panama. The building, erected shortly after the Conquest, is yet in excellent preservation, and the gardens would be fine if cleared of their wilderness of gigantic

weeds. Here I saw for the first time,—and I need scarcely say ate,—the delicious fruit named Perón, an apple grafted on the quince, and excelling in flavour even the celebrated New Town pippins of the United States. The cultivated grapes, pomegranates, guayavas, pears, and other fruits, abounded, and lay decaying on the ground. Nature had done every thing for the place, and the gardener enjoyed a sinecure, unless when called to exertion by the task of being showman to his neglected charge,—a labour for which he had the further inconvenience of being paid. We next rode to the immense and neglected palace of Chapultepec, built by the viceroy Galvez on a small isolated rocky hill, on which once stood a palace, and the harem of Montezuma. The lofty rooms are now all closed, the doors and window-shutters falling into decay. An air of utter desolation reigns throughout this once splendid building, from whence a view of the whole of the beautiful vale of Mexico is commanded. Beyond the western foot of the mound is an extensive space, inclosed with-

in walls, in which are yet standing the stupendous trees under whose shade the brown beauties of the Aztec monarch once wandered, concealed from the public gaze. Of these venerable trees, I scarcely observed one which exhibited the slightest symptom of decay: on the contrary, their clean healthy bark and branches, were it not for the immensity of their size, would lead to the supposition that they were of recent growth. The largest in this grove is fifty-two feet in circumference; and many of nearly that size are ranged in straight avenues, which they entirely overshadow. A white hoary lichen named, I believe, "Barba Española," and which is common on the large trees of this country, hangs like long waving locks from all the gigantic branches, and gives to these glorious trees a most indescribably majestic appearance. The Baron de Humboldt considers these "Ahüahüetes" as the *Cupressus disticha* Linn.* I heard here

* A small space at the foot of the rock Chapultepec has been prepared as a Botanic Garden. It is yet quite in its infancy, and some few plants had recently been placed there.

an extraordinary story of some poor people who immediately preceded the present keepers of the palace. The family, consisting of a man, his wife, and children, lived in a little hut under the shade of the building; and the mother one day hearing a scream from her youngest child, which had been playing at the back of the house, found it in the jaws of a large wolf. The animal on being attacked by her, merely relinquished its hold to seize on another poor infant; and being driven from that also, it at last turned and seized on the mother herself. The husband, who was working below, hurried up on hearing the outcries of his wife, and instantly killed the animal; but in a few days the poor woman and her two children died of hydrophobia.—We returned to Mexico by the aqueduct of San Cosmo, equal in every respect to that of Tacubaya, and at the outskirts of the city waited on Mr. Ward, *Chargé d’Affaires*, whose house was really superb. In its extensive garden, amidst overhanging and flowering trees I saw the tomb of my much-lamented friend the Honour-

able Augustus Waldegrave, who unfortunately lost his life by an accident when on a shooting-party. We entered the city by the noble street of Tacuba, through which Cortez is said to have marched to his final conquest; and amidst the splendid houses, well-paved streets, and rattling of coaches, the imagination must be strong indeed, which can people the spot with thousands of poor Indians striking the last blow for their country, and strewing the conqueror's path with their devoted bodies.

October 1.—I this morning accompanied Mr. Holdsworth and Mr. Exter to the Hacienda del Cristo, a few miles to the N.W. of Mexico, forming a part of the immense purchase of Mr. Baring. This is a pretty, well cultivated spot, and has among other things a pulque plantation and a soap manufactory; and it is not a little blessed by its proximity to the church of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, which is situated on a little hill at a league distance. This saint is one of the most important of the idols in the very prolific Mexican calendar: the image, which is very

small, and—with reverence be it spoken—noseless, was brought over at the time of the Conquest by one of Cortez's soldiers, and on various occasions worked most extraordinary miracles in favour of the invaders, which of course obtained for it high veneration. This afterwards gave place to a deeper feeling, and it was adored after having been seen at Otumba to hover over the Spaniards while engaged with multitudes of Indians, and to assist them in gaining the victory by “throwing sand” in the eyes of the savages! A chapel was now erected to the honour of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios; forms of prayer were established, and priests appointed; and the worship of Our Lady of the Remedies was added to that of the other idols of the Spaniards; until, having taken some disgust at its votaries, the image suddenly vanished, and years elapsed without any tidings of the offended saint. At length a blessed Indian, in chopping away the leaves of a maguey to prepare it for pulque, discovered the lost lady seated in the centre of the plant. She now suffered herself to

be restored to her worshipers, to whom she has ever since vouchsafed her presence. Happy indeed is the city of Mexico in the reconciliation; for without the aid of the idol, all the population would have expired of thirst, she possessing sovereign authority over the rains. The chapel of the saint is neat, and very richly endowed; she is enshrined in a box over the altar, bearing a crowned infant in her arms. Pictures of miracles in favour of her votaries are thickly suspended near the door; and even while we were in the sanctuary, three carriages full of ladies, who came to purchase masses of a sleek roguish-looking priest, drove up to the church; but we had not time to stay and see the ceremony. I have told a long story about Our Lady of the Remedies; but it may not be generally known that she once was of great prejudice to the interests of England, when Admiral Blak (Blake), having in the time of the tyrant "Cromwel" blockaded the treasure-ships destined for Havannah, was in consequence of national offerings and great humiliation of the

Viceroy and Court of Mexico, for many days and nights before the altar of the saint, visited with a gale of wind which blew him from the shore, and the galleons happily reached their destination. For this miracle, a splendid diamond ornament was presented to the image; and the whole story, with various others, is told in one of the most extraordinary books I ever saw, and which I have in my possession *.—I dined with Mr. Ward, and in the evening we drove to the Paséo, where some gaudy carriages were still rolling, and a troop of cavalry drawn up to keep order. We afterwards went to the theatre, where I saw, but heard little of, two farces, in one of which Prieto, the celebrated Madrid comedian, performed.

Oct. 2.—I visited the Universidad, in which an incipient museum of antiquities is forming, but as yet not opened to the public. The unfailing key,

* This modern publication, which is patronized by bishops and all the powers of the Church, is entitled “Lo Maximo en lo Minimo. La Portentosa Imagen de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, Conquistadora y Patrona de la Imperial Ciudad de Mejico.”

however, procured me admittance to the rooms, in which there was but little to interest, with the exception of some works in jade and obsidian. Of the latter is a large mask, well carved and proportioned, and exquisitely polished: and when it is remembered that the people who formed this, had no hard cutting instruments, and that the obsidian resembles glass in appearance although much harder in its substance, their ingenuity must be considered quite extraordinary*.

There were here a variety of figures of the rattlesnake, of various sizes, and chiefly of basalt; but all in the same posture, namely a compact coil, from which the head and rattle are somewhat elevated. With these were also a few mutilated figures of men and animals, and some fragments of little deities;

* From Don José Maria Bustamente I however heard of a still more wonderful production of Aztec skill, which he informed me was carried away by Humboldt. This was a large ring of obsidian perforated throughout its circle, so that a straw might be introduced at the only opening, and traversing the ring would come out again. With all the ingenuity of Europe, I know not how this wonderful ring could be imitated.

the whole inferior in number and variety to what I should have expected: but many more were on their road from the distant provinces; and I have no doubt but that the collection will ultimately become very interesting. In the court of the Universidad stands Tolsa's celebrated bronze equestrian statue of Charles IV., which once stood on a lofty pedestal in the Plaza, opposite the palace and cathedral, and was the boast and ornament of the city. Being the effigy of a king, it was displaced and removed from view, and may be considered as lost to the public, who, I know not why, sometimes speak of it as the Caballo de Troya (the Trojan Horse). In the corner of the same court-yard and behind a screen of planks are the statues of the goddess of war and some inferior idols, and the celebrated stone of sacrifice, (which by all accounts was never used for this purpose,) exhibited in somewhat embellished casts by Mr. Bullock. The great calendar stone is an admirable piece of workmanship, and is built into a wall of the cathedral, where its preservation may be en-

sured*. I was so fortunate as to procure excellent models in wax, of this, the goddess, and the stone of sacrifice, and would have also bespoken one of the monstrous serpent god which I saw in Piccadilly with the poor Indian victim peeping from its capacious throat; but the fact is, that the original statue is nowhere to be found, except in Mr. Bullock's exhibition. I was shown indeed a large serpent's head, but with closed jaws, and built as a corner-stone to a nobleman's house; but the body had never been heard of,—and I was laughed at for my compassionate inquiries after the piteous-looking countenance which I in London saw sliding down the horrific gullet of the great snake†. I dined with Mr. O'Gorman, the Consul General, who is married to a Mexican

* According to the Baron de Humboldt in his *Monumens de l'Amerique*, this immense work of art weighs 12 tons 9 cwt. 80lbs. "Son poids actuel est encore de plus de quatre cent quatre-vingt-deux quintaux."

† In a convent there is said to exist a very small mutilated figure of this kind; but the original of the immense cast which was exhibited, certainly does not exist.

lady, and on my way to his house walked to the exercising-ground of the artillery, where I saw ten well mounted brass field-pieces, but attended by a singular-looking set of horse-artillery men; all indeed in uniform jackets, but in every variety of hats and trousers, chatting, smoking, and laughing very merrily in the rear of their respective guns. One jocose fellow did me the honour particularly to notice me, by an offensive speech in French, backed by about a dozen select words from the English vulgar tongue, which our soldiers and sailors seem to have taught to all the world. A general laugh was raised at my expense, until I walked up to the wit, and gravely taking hold of his bridle spoke thus to him: "When you know what it is to play the part (*papél*) of a soldier, you will learn not to speak in the ranks. Were I your officer, I should sentence you to a good flogging." A speech which had a strong effect both on officers and men, to whom I kissed my hand with a polite "adios."

Oct. 3.—My morning was occupied in the pur-

chase of the famed wax figures of Mexican costumes, after which I went to the Botanic Garden, occupying a small portion in the rear of the palace. It was small, crowded to excess, and lamentably neglected; but I was treated with the sight of two fine trees of the manito or hand plant (in the Mexican language “Macpalcxochitl” Clavigero), which was once, and is even now, said to be in the distant provinces an object of Indian veneration*. I obtained three of the blood-red flowers, which somewhat resemble the dragon’s claws on China ware, and have their *five* fingers

* The *Cheirostemon platanoides* exists, according to Professor Cervantes, in forests in Guatemala. In the magnificent work on the “*Plantes Equinoxiales*” of M. Bonpland, vol. i. plate 24. p. 82. it appears that in the year 1801, but one of these trees was known to exist in Mexico; “que cet arbre avoit sans doute été apporté par les Indiens de Toluca, qui conservent encore pour lui une grande vénération, et qui sont persuadés qu’il ne peut exister un second,” &c. &c.

One of the trees which I now saw was about forty feet in height, the other perhaps thirty; and they were now, in October, in full bearing.—Since my return I find that specimens of this plant are growing in some of our English gardens. The largest is I believe that belonging to Messrs. Loddiges.

and little thumb terminated by points resembling claws. I ordered also a collection of seeds from the old gardener, who startled me by bringing a small tin box, and a large parcel of dried plants answering to the seeds within it, for which he asked the immense sum of three hundred dollars ! I therefore gave him a more humble commission, which he forwarded to me at Real del Monte. After this we went to the Senate-house, which is also in the palace, and heard an animated attack on Esteva, the minister of Hacienda. The chamber is small, oval, and very prettily furnished, having a little gallery for visitors at either end, but ill situated for hearing. Every thing seemed well conducted, except that very strong language was unceremoniously made use of amongst the speakers. While the discussion was at its highest, the president all on a sudden gave notice that it was two o'clock,—silence immediately ensued—all the members moved off—and thus ended the day ;—it being an established rule, that no Government affairs should ever keep these patriots from their

dinners and siestas, and that after the stated hour every man should be permitted to retire and recruit exhausted nature.

Oct. 4.—This was a memorable day for the Mexicans,—the anniversary of the first sitting of the Congress. At twilight, the park of artillery ranged in front of the palace aroused all the slumbering citizens. At dawn, flags waved triumphantly every where, and regiments of cavalry and infantry fired, manœuvred, and fired again, in the Plaza, for half the day. They then paraded the streets. Again the artillery was discharged : and in fact the whole time from sun-rise to sun-set was occupied by one-continued noise of guns, trumpets, and bands, sounding the eternal and monotonous “march of General Bravo.” I dined with Mr. Manning, at whose house was a very pretty collection of Indian antiques, and here also met Mr. Bullock ; who now finds how mistaken he was in the grand ideas he had formed of this country, and how much he has misled his countrymen in regard to the fertility of Mexico, against which and its

whole population he now rails most unmercifully. The principal charm of Mexico consists in the width and regularity of its streets, which cross at right angles, and in almost every instance traverse in one unbroken line the whole extent of the city; affording a fine perspective of nearly two miles, although the natives allow them a much greater length. They are all well paved, with pathways on each side, while through their centre, beneath a line of broad slabs, runs the common sewer. It is a far cleaner town than might be expected; well lighted, and now under a good police. Many of the houses are on a large or even magnificent scale, and the whole of those in the principal streets are fine buildings, but, as in many towns on the continent of Europe, the custom of letting the ground-floors as shops, stores, and manufactories is very prevalent even with those who possess the most splendid residences. There is one large inn, called the "Sociedad," which combines the characters of coffee-house and gambling depôt, and the Mesons are beyond description offensive

and incommodious. Cook-shops for others than Arrieros and Leperos are very scarce, and an absolute stranger would live worse in Mexico than the poor wretches who dive for their dinners in the regions of St. Giles. There are some warm and cold baths, which to all appearance are but rarely used, and abundant drinking-shops. The mercantile stores are well supplied, and numerous; but the greatest traffic among the common people is carried on in the Portales, of which there are several on an extensive scale. Here the stranger sees the most extraordinary variety of people and things, huddled into an apparently confused, yet well ordered mass. Several principal shops open to the Portales, and innumerable petty venders of both sexes also display their wares, crowded on tables, in boxes and in baskets; in frames, or spread on the ground. These consist of cutlery, mock jewellery, gaudy clothes, dolls, toys, wax-work, glass, china, shoes, books, and in fact, an infinite variety of things; while half-naked Leperos sleeping, overpowered by Pulque, or begging

of the passers-by ; priests, monks, officers, Indians, ladies, and Europeans, form a continually moving motley crowd. At one turn may be met the water-carrier with an immense jar hanging at his back suspended by a broad leather belt from the head, while a smaller vessel hangs by another strap in front, to maintain the balance. In a different quarter is seen a stout Lepero bearing a chair slung from his head and shoulders, and in which is seated an old importunate beggar. On turning to avoid this object there is a chance of stumbling over the fruit and flowers of some poor quiet Indian woman, as she sits crouched against a pillar, while the ear is frequently saluted by the loud cries of the news-men, who sell in considerable quantities the publications of the day ;—proclamations for or against the Gachupines (Spaniards), the Priests, the election of Deputies, or whatever may be the most agitating topic of the times. In a store under one of the Portales the English merchants have established an auction-mart, which is well attended, and is of great commercial

utility. In the Plaza, or great square, the principal objects of attention are the Cathedral, the Palace, and the Casa del Estado, built soon after the Conquest, and still, I believe, the property of the descendants of Cortez. The Cathedral, which is built on the site of the great Mexican temple, is spacious, dark, profusely ornamented, and very much resembling all the other churches of this country. The Palace is an immense building, comprising within it the residence of the President, the Senate-house and all the principal public offices. This and the cathedral occupy two sides of the square, and the others, with the exception of the space of the Casa del Estado, are composed of shops and dwelling-houses. Here it is that the Evangelistas (or ready writers) practise their vocation, as scribes to the public. I saw about a dozen of these men, seated in various nooks near the shop doors, occupied in penning letters from the dictation of their customers. Most of them, as might easily be perceived, were writing on different subjects: some treated of business;

while others again, as was evident by the transfixed hearts at the top of the paper, were transcribing the tender sentiments of the young men or women who were crouched down by their side. I looked over the shoulders of many of these useful scribes as they sat with their paper placed on a small board resting on their knees, and did not observe one who wrote a bad or illegible hand. The markets are good, but crowded and lamentably dirty ; and I looked in vain for the magnificent originals of the fruits and vegetables which flourished so invitingly in Mr. Bullock's garden in Piccadilly. Still the fruits, flowers, and vegetables were good, although not by any means equal to what I expected. Every thing, however, is reasonable, and an amateur in fruit may revel to his heart's content in pines and other tempting things at very small expense. One peculiarity of the market is the quantity of little cookeries which are carried on along its borders, or mingled with other goods, each under its humble shed of mats or blankets. Beneath these, sit Indian or

Creole women grinding maize or making tortillas, frying all sorts of rank smelling and tasting messes, boiling frijoles or black beans, and selling pulque to the multitude ; who squat down on their hams, place their little brown crockery bowl and their mess before them, and eat where they purchase their dinner. Here and there may be seen a strange wild-looking group earnestly playing at cards, or some game of chance ; or a drunken man, and sometimes a woman also, extended at full-length on the ground. The Indians, so easily distinguishable by their features and their dark brown or blue woollen dresses, constitute the most active part of the crowd at these places ; and numbers may constantly be seen bending beneath the weight of the produce of their gardens, which they bring on their backs, for many leagues, to dispose of at the markets. Their wives, although frequently bearing an infant at their back, also carry a little portion of the stock in trade, and walk quietly behind the men. They are a mild, silent, melancholy-looking people ; by choice, habit, and

difference of language, cut off from those round them: but towards evening, when their goods are disposed of, a gleam of sunshine seems to light up their bronzed features; the pulque makes them talkative, and they leave the city for their humble villages, in groups,—laughing, chatting, and singing most merrily. Report speaks of a compact made between husbands and wives, that both should never be tipsy at the same time; so that the one whose turn of happiness is completed may be protected, and steered safely home by the other. About this, however, I am rather sceptical; for I have frequently seen man and wife equally pulquefied. In justice I must say that the greater proportion of Indians avoid drinking, and those who most indulge in it are old men and old women.

The Indians also bring in for sale little toys and baskets, executed with considerable neatness; and the Carboneros (or venders of charcoal) amuse themselves, while waiting for customers, by carving little figures of birds and other animals in the commodity they sell. The ingenuity indeed of

the lowest classes of people in Mexico is very remarkable, and is chiefly displayed in the construction of toys. The Leperos form pretty figures of soap, wax, pith of certain trees, of wood, bone, and other materials, many of which can be purchased, in a ramble amongst the Portales, for the smallest coin.

CHAPTER X.

Leave Mexico—Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe—her Legend—Lake of Teseneco—Chiconautla—Pachuca—Real del Monte—Cerro de los Pelados—Cerro de las Navajas—Ancient Arrowhead of Obsidian—Works at the Mines—Hacienda of Regla—Cascade of Regla.

October 5.—**I** LEFT Mexico * soon after noon for Real del Monte, accompanied part of the way by Mr. Exter and Mr. Holdsworth. We rode about two miles E. N. E. over a fine broad causeway, which brought us into the celebrated Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. It was too late to see the church without express permission of the

* Let me advise visitors to Mexico not to send their horses and mules to a Potrero, or pasture place, instead of keeping them at more expense in the stables of the Meson. My poor beasts after a week's pasturage, as it is called, returned to me so weak and thin as to be scarcely able to travel; and not having time to recover their flesh before I reached Xalapa, I was a loser of above a hundred dollars by my parsimony.

sacristan, who was at dinner; but when I preferred my request, he readily granted it, and sent a little boy to do the honours of the place. His first care on entering the church was to light a number of tapers in front of the curtain which hid the miraculous picture; and after a pause he carefully drew up the envious veil which shrouded the painting by a "Divine Hand" from the gaze of the careless or profane. As there was no priest present, I took advantage of a little ladder placed near the altar, to obtain a closer view of this wonderful production, which is coarsely painted on a closely-grained canvass * previously primed with a white ground. It represents the Virgin with clasped hands, and clothed in a blue cloak covered with gilt stars. Her petticoat is painted in red and gold; and she stands on a large crescent, which is supported by a very ugly little cherub. This pic-

* This, according to the Abbé Clavigero, is woven of the bark of the Palm called Icxotl, and which is seen in considerable quantities near Vera Cruz, at two leagues from the coast, where the natives call it "Palma de coco real."

ture is peculiar, as having rays diverging from the figure in all directions; and although the colours are faded, and the gold very dull from age and dust, the eyes of the faithful do not fail to see a dazzling and unearthly splendour in the dress and features. The story runs thus:—Soon after the Conquest, a poor *untutored* Indian named Juan Diego, while labouring near the foot of the rock Tepeyaca, where the Sanctuary now stands, suddenly heard a peal of music, and saw before him the Blessed Virgin in the attitude and habiliments of the present picture. The man was very naturally astonished; but more so when the Virgin commanded him to go to the bishop of Mexico, and desire him to build a chapel to her honour, on that very spot. The bishop, being a true Catholic, would not believe in heavenly apparitions; he therefore reprov'd poor Juan Diego for his credulity, and sent him away. Again the blessed Virgin appeared, and delivered a more positive command; but the bishop once more dismissed the messenger, with threats of punishment for at-

tempting to impose on so pure and undeceiving a religion as that so recently and mildly established in Mexico. The mortified Juan Diego again retired to the rock Tepeyaca, where for the third time he tremblingly saw Our Lady, who with some displeasure repeated her orders; to which the man replied by begging a sign for the unbelieving bishop. "Go," said the Blessed Mother of God, "go and climb the rock, and on its hitherto barren summit you will find a token; take it to the bishop, and he will believe." Juan obeyed: and although it was in the depth of winter, he found the once desolate spot covered with the most exquisite flowers in full bloom. Filling therefore his Serape, or wrapper, with the miraculous roses, he posted joyously to the bishop, who called a number of priests to witness the opening of the Serape;—when, lo! as the flowers fell from it to the ground, this identical picture which I saw was found imprinted on it by the hand of God! refulgent in beauty, and almost too bright to be gazed upon. Nothing more was now required to enforce conviction: a splendid church.

was erected and endowed to the Patroness of Mexico; immense wealth was offered at her altar; and from that time every part of New Spain sent, and still does send her, annual tribute: and there is no town of note which has not a church open as a sanctuary for all criminals, and dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe. The first chapel was erected on the summit of the little hill of Tepeyaca, and has near it a singularly-shaped turret, so faced with masonry as to resemble a ship under sail. But as the fame and riches of the Virgin increased, it was thought fit to erect a larger temple to her honour; and the picture has been removed to the present church at the foot of the hill. This building is large and tawdry, with abundance of silver in balustrades, which from want of cleaning look like dirty pewter. Near this is a small chapel, erected over a wonderful and most blessed well of water, celebrated for the cure of all diseases, and sold at a cheap rate to the afflicted. It is inclosed by an iron railing, and is in custody of a reverend man, the appearance of whose nose would imply

that he rarely tasted any thing so mild as the fluid under his charge. He also sells to the devout, little books of the established prayers to the idol, together with small crosses, medals, and rosaries, which have touched her blessed figure ; as well as certain strips of narrow red ribband, marked, and purporting to be the length of the Virgin's hands, arms, face, and feet.

From hence our road lay over a flat marshy plain, which had once evidently been covered by the lake, and the left of which for some distance was bounded by an abruptly rising chain of hills. A few miles to the eastward lay the great lake of Tescuco, glistening in the sun, and appearing to lie at the immediate base of the snow-capped volcanos of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl *. A portion of the plain is crossed by a magnificent Spanish causeway, built with great strength, but now rarely used since the retiring of the waters by the Desague of Huéhuétoca. We passed on the eastern side, and towards even-

* Or, as I was informed, Estaguisguatl.

ing entered amongst a number of picturesque little hamlets, surrounded by their plantations of maguey and wild tunas, and met a *réqua* of thirty donkeys, each bearing two skins filled with pulque for the Mexican market. All had bells round their necks, and were merrily complimented by my people as being honoured in their occupation above all other asses. We had ridden about six leagues when I stopped for the night at the hut of the Judge of San Tomas Chiconautla, a little hamlet scarcely seen to peep above its surrounding vegetation. Beyond this, the distant gleaming snows of the volcanos had a beautiful effect. I was lodged in a small room filled with hideous images, pictures, and frame-work for processions, all covered with black cobwebs, and which was never used as a dormitory by any of the family, out of respect for its exalted contents. I confess to having somewhat marvelled at being allowed to sleep in so sacred a place, overhearing my landlord ask my servants "what I could eat;—whether I partook of the dishes of the country; and if I

should be angry at his offering me salt: for knowing that I was not a Christian, and having heard that presenting salt was an insult to heretics, he was fearful of offending a man of such importance; for he saw I was carrying a most valuable cargo," taking my mineralogical specimens for a treasure of dollars.

Oct. 6.—We set out at daylight on a painfully cold morning, and with all the country covered by a hoar frost. The rising sun, however, soon dispelled it, and became very powerful; but the morning's cold still remained in the fruit of the tunas, through which we rode, and which were delightfully refreshing. There is a plant of the Tuna family called "Petaya" and "Organo" in the language of the country, which shoots up in long fluted stems covered with thorns, and many feet in height. It is abundant and gigantic at Bolaños, and in a Rancho through which we passed this day, the gardens and the roads were bounded by it, planted in the most perfect regularity, and forming exceedingly secure and beautiful fences.

It is a variety of the *Cactus Peruvianus*. A plant cultivated in our hot-houses, which much resembles it, acquires the height of a foot or two.

At sunset we reached Pachuca, having been twelve hours riding sixteen leagues with my poor starved cattle. At a few miles to the left of Pachuca, and amongst the mountains, arise some very remarkable steeple-shaped and isolated rocks, of a great size, and by all accounts of porphyry. They are best seen from the plain, about a league before reaching Pachuca. This pretty little mining Real lies sheltered in a nook at the foot of the range of mountains in which Real del Monte is situated; and I found a good Meson, where without much trouble a supper was provided; a circumstance well worth noting, as there is scarcely a Meson in the country, with the exception of those between Mexico and Vera Cruz, where food can be obtained: the tired servants are obliged to seek about the town or village for some woman, who will make a few tortillas or a dish of black beans, or perhaps slaughter and cook a tough hen.

Oct. 7.—Riding before my party up a rugged and steep ascent, I crossed the ridge of the mountain; and in three leagues reached Real del Monte, where I became the guest of Captain Vetch, first commissioner of the Company.

Oct. 8.—I set out on an excursion to the mountain of los Pelados, where the obsidian is found from which the Indians formerly made their knives, spears, and arrow-heads. Our road lay through the farm of Guajolote, the property of the Real del Monte Company, and situated amidst the beautiful forests from which the Real is supplied. Near this is one of the most magnificent spots of rock scenery I ever saw, called the “Piedras Cargadas” from the particular formation of several gigantic isolated columns of porphyry, which rear themselves on the opposite pine-clad side of a deep woody glen. Several are capped (or Cargada) by a large detached mass of rock, like the Loganstone of Cornwall. The mountains divide on the right of these remarkable pillars, and the eye wanders far to the southward, over vast plains,

broken here and there by wooded barrancas, and bounded in the distance by a dark mountain ridge, beyond which again the volcanos of Mexico show the snowy part of their summits. I made a sketch of this, which very faintly describes the grandeur of the view. Passing Guajolote, which is four miles from the Real, and connected with it by excellent roads made by the Company, we rode into the thickets; and traversing all sorts of bewildering paths for two or three leagues, gained by a different ascent the summit of los Pelados. Here the trees have been cleared away, and a most extensive view is obtained, it being the highest point in the range, though Humboldt assigns a greater elevation to the remarkable rock, or Cerro de las Navajas, which lay beneath our feet. From this spot, as the day was remarkably clear, we enjoyed a view of the mountains surrounding the Valley of Mexico, with the picturesque volcanos. To the W.S.W. the Volcano of Toluca was distinctly pencilled against the sky; while to the eastward, Orizaba

and Perote reared their mighty summits above the dark and distant ridges at their feet. At the northern foot of the Cerro de los Pelados lies an immense chasm, or basin, in which the porphyritic rocks have assumed a columnar form, and which is evidently the irregular crater of a prodigious volcano. Dark pines and oaks add to the grandeur of the abyss; and its north-western ridge is still further embellished by three remarkable turret-shaped and detached mountains. To one of these, Humboldt has given the name of the "Cerro de las Navajas *," which more properly belongs to the spot on which we stood; although the obsidian is plentifully scattered over the surrounding hills and plains, the vein and the pits sunk on it by the Indians are on the summit of los Pelados. I know not if the workings have been deep; but at the present day they are nearly filled up, and only

* On this mountain, fragments of obsidian are found in great numbers of the form of arrow-heads and knife-blades, which have been fractured by the ancient inhabitants for use. These have given rise to the name of "Cerro de las Navajas, or Mountain of the Knives."

sufficiently hollowed to show their original forms, which were circular. Here we found several beautiful specimens of the Plateada, or silver-coated obsidian, with many other interesting varieties; and having laden ourselves with these, pursued another route homewards by the precipitous edge of the great crater, near which we were obliged to lead our horses, and round the foot of the Cerro de las Navajas.

Oct. 11.—An attack of dysentery, which since my exposure to the rains at Ozumatlan had been slowly increasing, now became so severe as to render it imprudent for me to go underground in the mines, where I must unavoidably have got wet; and finding myself for many days extremely weak, my excursions were confined to expeditions about the surface on horseback. In these I was enabled to visit the very extensive grass works and erections, many of which are on the same models and principles as are seen in the Cornish mines. The stores, workshops, foundry and offices, are of substantial masonry; and the shafts of every mine, as

well as these establishments, are inclosed within high well-built walls. The engine-houses were in rapid progress, and in that of Dolores the engine was nearly completed. A steam saw-mill was set at work during my stay at the Real; and the horizontal engine of Messrs. Taylor and Martineau, which had been pumping but a short time at Moran, had very nearly (and has since entirely) cleared the mine to the bottom. For the supply of the engine at Moran the timber is cut in abundance from the face of the steep mountain on which it stands; and the whole of the surrounding hills abound in wood, which with but little trouble and expense can be brought to the other engines also. Stamping engines to be worked by steam were erecting in the Real, and others to be worked by water were nearly completed at the New Hacienda of Sanchez, situated at the end of the valley about four miles to the northward. Dressing floors and other requisite preparations for crushing and washing the ores have here been prepared; stores and residences are built; and the whole establishment

is inclosed by walls, and almost hidden by the luxuriant vegetation around it. For the transport of building and other materials, light European carts have been introduced with great success, and excellent roads, blasted in many instances with great labour from the hard porphyry rocks, now traverse the extensive mining establishment in every direction. English tools are in great request; and in fact, were it not for the peculiarity of the stupendous scenery of the place, a visitor might almost imagine himself in England.

Real (or more properly Mineral) del Monte* is indeed a beautiful spot, and the valley or ravine, which extends about two miles to the northward of the town and two miles further to the New Hacienda of Sanchez, is most superb. The rapid mountain torrent tumbles through it over a rugged rocky channel, and from the banks to the summit of the steep mountains which closely

* The term "Real", or Royalty, was formerly applied to a mining district; but since the Revolution, the title of "Mineral" has been substituted for it.

hem it in, is an unbroken forest of the Ocote (or fir), the evergreen oak (of which nine varieties are met with in the district), and the "Oyamel." This lovely scenery continues until immediately beyond Sanchez, when it leaves the gorge of the mountains, and enters on the flatter yet still beautiful country. There is scarcely a spot in this extent but is worthy the pencil of the artist. The various tints of the rich foliage, the picturesque bridges, bold rocks, and well-peopled roads, blasted in the porphyritic rock, with the ever-varying curves and leaps of the stream, possess a novelty and charm seldom equalled.

It may not here be amiss to explain to my readers some of the very natural reasons for the ruinous state in which the generality of Mexican mines were found, and which do not apply to long neglected workings in England.—We will suppose the mine, for some cause or other, to be suddenly abandoned. Those levels which by constant care have from the time of their formation been kept clear of water, now receive it. If there is any soft

ground in them, great ruin must ensue. The periodical rains, which can be little understood by those who have never entered the tropics, carry vast quantities of earth, nay even large rocks, down the shafts, on whose upper edges a vegetation, of which many people can form no idea, is shooting up with all that wild luxuriance peculiar to the country. The Mexicans never boarded over the shafts, but left them quite unprotected. A small twig is seen hanging over the abyss:—in a year this assumes the form of a tree, and in a very few more, is one; its roots hang over the shaft; it detaches large masses of earth, and is at last swept into the pit to add to the other deposits. This may be the case with many trees and shrubs in rapid succession; and in a very few years a shaft is frequently filled almost to its mouth. The labour of our countrymen has in many instances been directed to clear these places again. The side earth is found to be loosened, the shaft in fact unsafe;—the slow, expensive operation of “timbering” therefore becomes requisite; some kind of ma-

chinery is necessary to hoist the earth and rocks from below ; and after a great expense of time and money the workmen clear “down to water”—but it is water filled with rubbish. This water must be pumped out, or drawn by malacates and skin bags,—a double operation therefore goes on to clear out the water and earth. A level is arrived at:—this level must also be cleared. And so proceeds this arduous work, until the desired lode is reached. Proper allowances are seldom made by persons inexperienced in mining, for the time requisite for the accomplishment of clearing a mine that has been long neglected.

October 12.—On the 12th I rode out with Mr. Colquhoun to the farm of Ystula, belonging to the Company, situated about twelve miles from Real del Monte. Immediately after leaving the Barranca at Sanchez, we passed through the very pretty little village of Omitlan ; and riding over plains covered with small Ranchos and maize-fields, arrived at Ystula, where about two thousand acres are under cultivation upon the English plan.

The ground is so laid out, that had not a solitary maguey plant occasionally made its appearance by the way-side, I should have imagined myself in England. The illusion was kept up by my seeing English ploughs, harrows, carts, and waggons. A small stream runs on each side of the estate; and every field can, if necessary, be irrigated. In fact, under existing circumstances, this farm is of considerable importance. Our farming implements are admired, and will be imitated: the method of preparing the land is approved by the natives; and the certainty that turnips may be sown and potatoes planted in a field instead of in little patches, has excited admiration amongst the Hacenderos near Ystula. In the afternoon we rode to the Hacienda of San Miguel, the country residence of the Conde de Regla, whom we found at home, and who was very kind and attentive, promising to meet us on the morrow at Regla. He was living in a ground-floor house, out of repair, ill furnished, and comfortless; the rooms all looking into a small square in the centre,—no advantage being

taken of a fine view, of which the Mexicans have less idea than perhaps any people in the world. The owners of the largest and finest Hacienda, yielding perhaps a revenue of 100,000 dollars, are content with apartments and provisions which an English gentleman would hesitate to offer to his servants.

October 13.—On the following morning we rode to Regla, about a mile N. W. of the farm, and entered the celebrated Hacienda de Plata, which is said to have cost 500,000*l.* sterling. It is now an immense ruin, crowded with monstrous arches of masonry, which appear as if they had been constructed to support the world; and I conceive that half the enormous sum which was expended in this place, has been thus consumed. Preparations of a more useful nature were now in forwardness amongst the mighty ruins; but nothing could relieve the air of desolation, which gave the Hacienda the appearance of a battered fortress. It lies deep in a precipitous Barranca, fenced in by the singularly fine basaltic cliffs, of which so much

has been said; and close above it is the celebrated Fall of Regla, of which Humboldt and other travellers have spoken in such exaggerated terms. The cascade is not above twenty-five feet in height; and whatever may be the swelling of the stream in the wet season, can scarcely at any time exceed it; since from its falling into a basin, the water below would rise nearly in the same proportion, and still leave the apparent volume about the same. The basaltic columns are remarkably regular; the left-hand cliff cannot be less than one hundred feet higher than the top of the fall, where the waters are fancifully divided by two pillars, which appear so much separated from their neighbours as to lead to a supposition that they will soon be entirely detached and broken. At this season the river was low, but flowed rapidly over a rugged bed of broken columns on its escape from the basin which first receives it, and which is almost overshadowed by beautiful trees. About three hundred yards lower, after sufficient water has been turned off for the supply of the machinery at the Hacienda, it is allowed to

escape over a paved sloping fall of considerable extent; and though we must dismiss the exaggerated ideas of the cascade, the ravine is one of the most beautiful and perfect basins of basalt in the world. The steep banks of the stream, which are composed of the debris of the overhanging columnar cliffs, are eminently picturesque; and amidst the blocks and broken basaltic pillars are flourishing luxuriant rock plants, unknown to Europeans; while on the precipice to the left hand climbs an immense plant of the "five-leaved vine," which fancifully covers the columns to a great extent with its bright scarlet and green leaves. In this sequestered spot the coyote and the racoon ramble fearlessly, and the rattle-snake delights to coil and bask itself on the tabular faces of the broken basalt. The Barranca in which Regla stands is of considerable extent; and at a short day's journey to the N.W., the pine, the sugarcane, and all the fruits of the Tierra Caliente are cultivated by the Indians. On leaving Regla, we again returned to the Mineral. The town of Mi-

neral del Monte is small, and scattered irregularly on the hill side. It may contain about four thousand inhabitants,—who do not, however, by any means constitute the whole population of the district, huts being plentifully dispersed along the ravines. It has two churches, and a very tolerable Sunday's market. The dwellings are generally of Adobe*, and have sloping roofs covered with Tajamanil†. The natives are now quiet and well-behaved, although on the first arrival of the English there was a strong complaint against them: but I fully believe that an equal share of blame attached to many of our own artificers,—a race as strong in their prejudices and nationalities as the strangers with whom they were brought into association. This place in fact almost appears an English colony, from the number of our countrymen, the quantity of buildings erected after the Cornish models, and the use of carts, waggons, and tools of all descriptions. The height of this “Mineral” above the level of the sea, is according to Don José

* Sun-dried bricks.

† Pine shingles.

Maria Bustamente, at the Parroquia (or church) 2758 metres*; the climate is cold, and sometimes raw amongst the mountains, affecting the lungs of new-comers, and causing shortness of breath after even slight exertion. I was weak and unwell during my stay at Real del Monte, and the effect continued longer with me than is usual. Others, however, experienced the same sensations, until they became accustomed to breathe the highly rarefied air; and I myself felt no inconvenience from it at the expiration of a week. Nothing is cultivated in the immediate Barranca, for which want of space may be considered as the only impediment.

* Highest point of the Veta Biscaina, 2891 metres. Moran shaft, 2575 metres. Pachuca, in the Plaza, 2431 metres.

CHAPTER XI.

Departure from Real del Monte—Zingalucan—Lake of Tecocomulco—Appan—Volcano of Malinchi—Buena Vista—Huamantla—Volcano of Orizaba—Guatepec—Barranca and Mines of Somalhuacan—Las Vigas—Xalapa—Plan del Rio—Puente del Rey—Paso de Ovejas—Manantial—Vera Cruz—San Juan de Ulua—Embark for England.

October 20.—I WAS now, although weak, sufficiently recovered to set out for the coast; and at half past ten in a misty cold rainy morning I started, accompanied by Mr. Exter, who had joined me that we might travel together to Xalapa. My friend Mr. Colquhoun had lent me his little “Dearborn” (a light American waggon), and as I had a merry postillion who piqued himself on his driving, all my bones appeared to be disjoined in about half an hour. In six gloomy leagues we reached the little village of Zingalucan, where (next to its only shop) we procured the best and most comfortable room in which I ever lodged in this country.

Oct. 21. Temp. 42° at noon.—The rain continued without intermission all this night and the day also: we could not therefore set out; but were consoled by a visit from Messrs. Colquhoun and Buchan, who passed the day with us, and advised our not attempting to proceed until the weather cleared, as the country before us was intersected by deep marshes and swamps. We were all miserably cold, but with the aid of a large pan of charcoal and some cigars contrived to comfort ourselves.

Oct. 22.—In the forenoon the weather cleared a little*: our visitors accompanied us for a short distance, and we pursued our journey, riding for a few miles amongst smooth-topped hills and undulating dales, which with their detached clusters of firs and oaks, have the appearance of our park scenery. Here we saw a towering pine which the

* The "wet season" had now ceased, at least the periodical fall of rain was no longer certain; but the elevated range of mountains in this part catching the first clouds as they fly from the seaward, are not unfrequently visited with showers combining mist and a small drizzling rain.

lightning had blasted in a remarkable manner, having first struck its topmost shoot, and then traversed the whole trunk to the very roots in the most regular spiral form, stripping off in its progress a groove of the bark of an equal breadth throughout, which gave the tree the appearance of an immense screw. We now entered on low swampy plains, deeply intersected by fissures and water-courses, and indented through their whole extent by the wheels of the waggons which had with so much labour carried the steam-engines to the Real, and which at this particular place met with great impediments. In four leagues from our outset we passed on the southern side of the Lake Tecocomulco, which at this season appeared narrow, shoal, and irregular, about five miles in length, and having its borders absolutely blackened with ducks, which we were in no disposition to shoot during the heavy rain. We wound round the foot of a low Sierra; and passing some rough rising ground thickly overspread with masses of lava and abounding in Tunas, descend-

ed to the plains of Appan, much flooded and having several shallow lakes. Here we passed a gloomy Hacienda, near which in one night twenty-one mules of the transport party employed in conveying machinery to the mines of Real del Monte, were swept away and drowned by a sudden fall of rain. Hence in a league we reached the ruinous and half-peopled mud city of Appan*, where we found a good meson for our animals, but very bad rooms for ourselves, although a kitchen fortunately made part of the establishment. We waited impatiently for our people and cargoes; but as they did not appear, we were obliged to sleep in our wet Serapes on a damp mud flood, abundantly stocked with very hungry fleas.

Oct. 23.—An accident to one of my mules and the escape of my loose horses into the woods had stopped our party, who now joined us, having suffered some slight damage. The animals having had no food all this time, required that we should

* An eight-league journey.

give them a day of rest ; and we rambled in the mean while about Appan, which although but thinly inhabited and half in ruins, has lately been elevated from a village into a city. The church is large, and has a very peculiar and pretty steeple, unlike any I ever saw. The inhabitants of Appan were celebrated during the revolution for their activity in annoying the Spaniards and cutting off their convoys, which, as the town occupies a central position among the swampy plains, were obliged to pass that way. The gently rising hills are famous for their maguey plantations ; and the pulque of Appan, said to give an annual revenue of 400,000 dollars to Mexico, is the most esteemed in the country. South of the town lies an extensive shallow lake abounding in ducks and gray geese, of which we purchased some from two extraordinary sportsmen, who passed on their way to the water, one mounted on a large black bull, and his companion on a cow of the same colour, both intended as "Stalkers." The knight of the bull was a merry and sufficiently pulquified old man,

who, the morning being raw, was well wrapped up in his Serape (with an old long Spanish gun), which scarcely held together, crossed before him on the withers of his steed. The tips of the bull's horns were sawn off, and through the cartilage of his nose a long rope was passed by way of bridle. A coarse mat covered his back as a saddle, and a ragged sheep-skin above formed a soft seat for the rider. The only store that the veteran appeared to carry, besides his ammunition, was a large skin of pulque suspended from the horns over one side of the bull's curly head. The whole costume of the man and beast was so singular that I made a sketch of them, at which the old fellow was highly pleased.

Oct. 24.—Setting out at the earliest dawn we passed through several extensive fields of small ill-looking barley, which men and women were gathering. Before us lay the remarkable volcanic mountain of Malinchi*; its summit partially covered with snow, and the base enveloped in dense gray clouds, amongst which numerous little dark volcanic cones

* Called also the "Volcan" or "Cerro de Tlascala."

reared themselves around their mighty mother. As we advanced, the crops of barley improved in extent and appearance, and large tracts of the plain were covered with numerous herds of cattle. In four leagues we reached the Hacienda of Buena Ventura, where we made our breakfast on a log by the road side, as an excuse to drink of the pulque for which this place is deservedly celebrated. The Administrador very obligingly took us into the store of this national luxury, where we saw large square hides suspended by their four corners from strong posts, and containing the maguey juice in its various states of fermentation. The Hacienda derives from 4000 to 5000 dollars a year by the sale of pulque on the premises, to people who trade in it to Mexico. It is carried there in goat or sheep skins, each of which holds four or five Arobas *, and two constitute the cargo of an ass; this grave animal having the honour of carrying the favourite beverage, to the total exclusion of horses and mules. It is here sold at one dollar

* The Aroba is 25lbs.

for five Arobas; but in Mexico the price is higher, and a duty is paid on every ten Arobas. The usual time required here to perfect or ripen the pulque is twenty days; when all fermentation (which is kept up by frequent additions in the first few days) has ceased, and it is sufficiently strong to bewilder the brain. A league beyond Buena Vista lies the fine Hacienda of Sultepec, which belongs to the same proprietors. Passing along the plain of Buena Vista, and leaving a village of the same name on our left, in three leagues and a half we ascended a small rugged hill and passed through the village of Tlangatepec, where the "Colectoria," a large building, stands on the right of the rise, and the meson from its exterior promised but little internal comfort. Our road now lay across an uninteresting plain, over which a great number and variety of hawks were soaring in quest of a small burrowing animal of the marmot tribe, called "Tusa," which is very abundant; and, as well as the burrowing owl, a small mottled bird excavates the ground so extensively, that horses

will sometimes plunge knee-deep into the hollows. We also saw a few hares, and some quails of a very diminutive size. In one league and a half we passed the Hacienda of Ecatepec, beyond which a species of dwarf cypress becomes very prevalent in a country broken by masses of tufa, and deep ravines hollowed out by the rains. In two leagues, the ground became more even and grassy around the Hacienda of Piedras Negras; from whence, having Malinchi on our right, we passed through abrupt gulleys and ravines now dry and sandy, but in one of which a waggon of the Real del Monte transport party, containing thirty-six hundred weight of iron, was washed away by the rains; nine mules were drowned, and several men escaped with great difficulty. All the channels centre in a broad and flat sandy water-course, on one side of which we reached the Hacienda of San Diego, and lodged for the night in its meson.

Oct. 25.—As we rode out in the clear twilight, our attention was arrested by a loud chorus of voices, and passing the gates of the Hacienda we

saw sixty or seventy Indians, bareheaded and standing in a line, singing, not unharmoniously, the morning hymn to the Virgin. We remained uncovered by them while their chaunt continued, after which they entered the gates to commence their daily labour. The simple and sincere devotion of these poor people was far more imposing than all the gorgeous processions and church festivals, and it was impossible to hear this hymn without fully participating in their feelings. Beyond San Diego, the road enters on the deep sandy plains of Huamantla, a considerable town about a league to the southward, celebrated for thieves and for its extensive contraband trade in the tobacco of Orizaba. A number of Haciendas are scattered over the plains, and agriculture is much attended to. Daybreak afforded us a scene which I sketched, with a full consciousness of my inability to do it justice, but in the faint hope that some artist would fill up my slight outline. Malinchi, at whose foot we were travelling, lay to the southward of us, shrouded in a cold gray mist,

which at first obscured even its lofty peak; but long ere a clear light shone upon us, the first rays of the morning sun struck upon the extreme pinnacle of its snow-clad summit as it glistened like a star above the dark zone of clouds beneath; the wide sloping base lay in deep shade covered with black forests, while the more immediate land was clothed by large tracts of waving barley. To the west lay the conical offspring of the mountain, almost black with their woods and the intensity of shade; while in the extreme distance behind them Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, clothed in their everlasting snows, shone like silver beneath the bright morning ray which at this early hour could alone strike on such lofty mountains. Heavy round clouds filled the east and hid Orizaba from our view, but the sight of it was not requisite to render the morning dawn the most glorious I ever beheld. E. S. E. from our outset we passed the small village of Guadalupe on a bare low hill, and all the surrounding country was entirely under cultivation as far as the eye could reach. This was the season of

harvest, when hundreds of men and women were occupied in reaping the extensive tracts of barley; while here and there large parties of people were busy ploughing. This operation is carried on differently from the English process, a small space at a time being completed by a number working close together. In the extent of about an acre I counted thirty-three ploughs at work, drawn by oxen, horses, mules, and asses. The soil here is dry and sandy, and the roads in consequence execrable. Water is procured only from deep wells, whence it is raised by a mule in a small malacate. We passed in their turns the Haciendas of Vasconcilla, San Juan. Bautista, and San Francisco, which latter has a meson. While near this, the clouds which had filled the S. E. broke almost suddenly, and the volcano of Orizaba burst at once upon the sight, degrading in an instant the intervening mountains into insignificance. In three and a half sandy leagues further, we passed to the right of the Hacienda of Viréyes, where neither food nor lodging were to be had, and then entered on the

extremely level plain of Tepeagualco; in some places deep in clay, in consequence of the recent rains, and in others abundantly covered with the efflorescence of the muriate and carbonate of soda. The plain was dangerously excavated by tusas and owls, which with rattle-snakes are said to abound here, but the rawness of the day was unfavourable for seeing any of them on their rambles. The high isolated and picturesque cone of Pizarro terminates the view over the plain, and in four leagues and a half we reached its foot, to the left of which lies the town of Tepeagualco. We did not enter it; but having taken pulque and tortillas at a Rancho on the plain, passed round the southern foot of Pizarro, where pumice-stones of many varieties of colour, in large detached masses and extensive broken beds of tufa, are very abundant. In three leagues we passed the small Hacienda of S^{ta} Gertrudes, from whence, although our animals were sadly tired, we determined on pushing for Guatepec, a Hacienda and depôt of the Real del Monte Company. Soon after leav-

ing St^a Gertrudes, we passed several low ridges of lava and tufa, very slightly covered with Tunas and Yucca trees. It is a wild rugged spot, and celebrated as the favourite resort of robbers, particularly in the time of the celebrated Gomez *, a party of whose people murdered Mr. Crawford, an American gentleman travelling with Captain Murray of H. M. S. Valorous, and afterwards robbed and bound every one in company (1823). Long after dark, in three leagues we reached Guatepec, having travelled about twenty-two leagues and been fourteen hours on horseback.

* The enormities committed by this monster in human shape are scarcely to be paralleled in the histories of the most barbarous savages. He was, while chieftain of an unusually cruel band of robbers, invited to join the Spanish army during the Revolution ; and accepting their service, distinguished himself by his bravery and ferocity : when affairs assuming a different aspect, he quitted the Royalists in order to engage in a more lucrative profession, by returning with augmented forces to his old occupation. He now robbed equally friends and foes, which last he chose to consider the now falling Spaniards, on whom he committed every refinement of cruelty, mutilating them in a manner too shocking to describe, and killing them by lingering torments. The Republicans,

Oct. 26.—The Hacienda of Guatepec is situated on the plains at the foot of Perote, which a clear morning enabled me to see with its remarkable “Cofré” to great advantage. This, as I learnt from a gentleman who ascended it, is a rock of about fifty feet in height, and so precipitous that it can only be climbed on one side and at considerable risk. Its similitude to a square chest has obtained it the name of Cofré. The mountain is clothed nearly to its summit by dark forests of firs; and its height, according to Humboldt, is whose views he in some degree assisted, at length remonstrated with him on the cruelty of shedding so much blood,—to avoid which he buried his victims alive! and sometimes, to prolong the torment, with their heads just above ground!! When the Spaniards were driven out, all men became his prey, and he became master of the road from Mexico to Vera Cruz. At length, when his villanies had exceeded all bounds, he was taken prisoner, and as a punishment was exiled! to California, where he soon raised an army of Indians and desperate men; and when I was in Mexico, news arrived that he was devastating the coast of the Gulf, burning, robbing and murdering, and threatening an advance into the interior, which created great alarm; as, should he reach any of the wavering and discontented North-western provinces, and be joined by any large force, the country would be in danger.

13,416 feet, and 1260 feet more elevated than the Peak of Teneriffe. Having settled that my mules should go forward on the morrow to the village of Las Vigas, about five leagues to the eastward, I accompanied Mr. Exter on a visit to the Mines of Somalhuacan, which he directed for the "Mexican Company." In a league to the eastward we passed through the neat little village of Perote, about three quarters of a mile from the fort of the same name, in which is a military school, a manufactory of musquets, and a depôt of stores. It stands on an open plain, but could be easily approached, or at all events, its supplies, particularly of ammunition, which, oddly enough, is stored in two magazines near Gualtepec, could be cut off.

Turning to the north-east, we passed through the hamlet of Sierra Léone, and entered a forest of pines, where a cold thick mist bewildered us, until we found a boy who became our guide to the mines, by an Indian road even more precipitous and difficult, if possible, than the descent to the Corral at Madeira. We led our horses downwards for

four hours, the rain and fog rarely permitting a view of twenty yards in extent ; yet we could easily observe how continually our narrow slippery path skirted the edge of precipices, or wound at the foot of immense basaltic columns, from which heavy cascades were tumbling into the abyss beneath. We could not have descended less than 3,000 feet, when we arrived at the depths of the Barranca, and crossed by rude alpine bridges over impetuous torrents, surrounded by the most luxuriant shrubs and trees. By a short path we reached the little village of Somalhuacan, of which, from the lateness and obscurity of the evening, we could see nothing, although as the night advanced the sky cleared, and a brilliant moon discovered to us that we were in a bowery valley closely hemmed in on all sides by immense precipitous mountains.

Oct. 27.—The following morning was delightfully clear, and we set out at an early hour to visit the establishments of the mines; which, though at this period in a backward state, can be easily

and not expensively extended to the greatest advantage. The copper, which is the chief production, has only been picked out in holes or burrows from the face of the dizzy cliffs, and is so abundant that the place may be aptly called "Virgin ground." The whole of these rocks abound in metals; and the little excavations made by those who have worked for gold, and the larger openings for the extraction of copper, appear from beneath like the aeries of so many sea-birds in the bold precipices above. Veins of gold have at times been found here, and have made the fortune of those who explored them: but the chief produce is in those coppers distinguished in Cornwall by the name of yellow ore. A quantity had already been smelted by the rude native process, and was said to contain a considerable "ley" of gold. Silver ore has also been found in small quantities, but of inferior quality, and has never been worked. We ascended by a hazardous path up an abrupt cliff to the mine of Santa Cruz, situated immediately above one of the torrents which rushes from the

mountains. Its wide rugged mouth opens to the precipice, and the workings go no further than a large chamber-like excavation, where the rich yellow ore, unmixed with foreign substances, is two varas in thickness.

The lode dips to the south, and, in common with the greater number of those in the barranca, runs across the valley from east to west. This place is but three-quarters of a mile from the village; and if attended to, may be of very great value. The present defect is, the insufficient means for transporting the ore to the Hacienda.—I next visited several other points at which works have been commenced, and all with equal promise: in fact, the metal is so abundant as to be seen cropping out of the rock even on the common pathways near “Santa Cruz,” where also a very hard and heavy kind of iron-stone is to be found. The Barranca, without even excepting the Corral of Madeira, is one of the most magnificent objects I have ever seen. Abundant mountain streams fall into it in every direction, and two rapid rivers join in a common stream

near a Hacienda partially completed. One of these, which runs from the north-west, is impregnated with salt, and the other, rushing from the southward, is quite fresh. On joining, they run to the N.N.E. where the ravine opens and discovers a range of bold distant mountains. This in fact is the direction of the whole barranca, which is about half a mile in width. The village is small and ruinous, but will now speedily improve in comparison to what it formerly appears to have been, when prior to the revolution the metals were worked. Here the bounty of Nature, in the extreme luxuriance of its vegetable productions, vainly invites the lethargic peasant to bestow the most moderate portion of labour, which would bless him with abundance of delicious fruits and vegetables; yet, with the exception of a little maize and some pompions, I saw nothing under cultivation. The maize was the finest I had seen, having stalks fourteen feet in height, abundantly furnished with ears of grain (Helotes), in which, I was informed, a minute and very venomous snake is

sometimes found secreted. Here the delicious "Chiramoya" flourishes in a wild state; roses are absolutely a weed; and among some neglected peach-trees in full blossom I saw an immense orange-tree covered with fruit. Tobacco is an unregarded weed; the Tunas masas, an excellent fruit, is very abundant. Further down the warm barranca, the pure Indians, who are always more industrious than the half Creoles, cultivate with little labour all the tropical fruits, with the exception of the pine-apple; and the botanist who wades through the wild and almost too luxuriant vegetation which chokes the depth of the valley, will never regret the troubles of the descent to such a place. The breadth and freshness of the leaves is quite peculiar: that of the castor-oil plant acquires a great width; and the foliage of the two gigantic weeds named "Mala muger" and "Mal hombre," equals that of the Yam in size and brilliancy.

Notwithstanding the inviting appearance of the flowery wilderness at this place, it is a singular

fact that birds are seldom (indeed I was told, never,) seen so low down as the village of Somalihuacan, although a few hundred feet up the mountain they are found in as great abundance as elsewhere. The temperature being high, reptiles of every sort abound. The tarantula acquires an enormous size, and scorpions are very numerous. The surrounding mountains rise in a succession of ranges, of the grandest and most imposing forms, and there is scarcely one in sight from the valley which does not present columnar cliffs of basalt or porphyry, resting in many instances on strata of sand, limestone, or other minerals: the geologist, in an hour's walk, would be here enabled to form a most interesting and diversified collection. The mountains, notwithstanding their steepness and the boldness of their cliffs, are clothed with immense oaks, having forty or fifty feet of their straight trunks unincumbered by branches; by gigantic planes, beech, and sycamore trees, and superb towering pines. Having passed a morning I shall not easily forget, we took leave of

Mr. Exter, and began the ascent of the mountains by another path than that by which we descended. In many places the animals actually ascended by the trunks of trees, formed as steps, putting to proof the strength of eyes and nerves of those who ventured to look into the valley. As we slowly travelled upwards from the depths, the woods became enlivened by the bright blue jay; and we heard the shrill discordant cries of the large gaudy Lories, (called "Guacamalla" and "Papagayo,") which here abound.

Nothing could possibly exceed the magnificence of the ever-varying scenery through which we passed; and on reaching the summit, (S.W. by W. of the mines,) after two hours and a half severe labour to our horses, we espied to the northward, on an airy pinnacle about 2000 feet above Somalhucan, a small village named Pueblo Nuevo, whose inhabitants are occupied in the culture of maize on the table land near them. We came out on an irregular plain, covered with tall thin pines, and enveloped, as on our descent, in a thick fog. In a

few miles ride we reached the high-road from Perote to Xalapa, near La Cruz Blanca, and soon crossed a small bridge over the stream of Rio Frio, at which the paved "Calzada" commences. It does not seem to have made one foot more progress since the time when seen by the Baron de Humboldt. We shortly after reached the village of Las Vigas, five leagues to the eastward of Perote, where I found my cargoes already arrived. On entering the village we saw a man carrying game-cocks to the Mexican market, each lodged in a separate round basket, and so arranged that no one bird could see his neighbour. The baskets were hung on two frames, each carrying twelve, and lashed at the top, so that the bearer walked beneath them, looking like a moving shed thatched with poultry. The houses of Las Vigas reminded me forcibly of the Swiss cottages, as they were entirely constructed of the trunks of pines, covered in by Tajamanil; and the general appearance of the long scattered village bespoke more comfort than I had been accustomed to see on the

road. A dense fog set in towards evening; and Las Vigas has the reputation of being seldom without one, from causes which Humboldt has so clearly demonstrated while speaking of Xalapa*.

Oct. 28.—We had a delightful morning; and a tremendously heavy bill from our host the Alcalde, who, pious man! was building a chapel at the cost of himself and his visitors. Three heavy waggons had stopped here, on their way from the coast to the mines of Tlalpuxahua; and after the confusion of harnessing nine kicking mules to each, I was much amused by the gravity of the “Tronco” (or wheel postillion) of that which led. He had been most vociferously abusive; but on mounting, devoutly signed the cross over the ears of his mules, saying, “En el nombre de Dios todo poderoso, que no nos hare daño, sube yo †.” To this the “Guia”

* “Unfortunately, about 4264 feet is the mean height to which clouds ascend above the plains adjoining the sea, from which circumstance these temperate regions situated on the declivity (for instance, the environs of the city of Xalapa) are frequently enveloped in thick fogs.”—Humboldt.

† “In the name of God, who is all-powerful, who will defend us from harm, I mount.”

(or leader) replied, on swinging himself into his seat and crossing a countenance of a brassy hue from the recent effects of yellow fever, “Y yo en el nombre de San Francisco*,”—an invocation much more frequent than that to the Deity, who, as I have already remarked, is considered in a very secondary degree of veneration. We at length set out over the broad paved causeway which continues to Xalapa, enlivened by Indians, travellers, and immense requas of laden mules. For two leagues our road lay through a country covered with the black bubbled scorix of lava, bearing the usual name of “Mal Pays,” and which, in the lapse of centuries, had acquired sufficient soil amongst its clefts to nourish a little wilderness of shrubs: amongst these the castor-oil plant was very flourishing. The Escoba bush, also abounding in Real del Monte, under so different a climate, is here very common. On approaching the Cerro de San Miguel, from whence in clear weather the sea may be discerned, we were sorry to observe

* “And I, in the name of St. Francis.”

a dense range of clouds floating over the land in that direction; yet beneath them we could perceive the Tierra Caliente glowing in yellow radiance, far to the eastward. In four leagues from Las Vigas we passed through the little village of San Miguel; and in two leagues further, that of Bandarilla, enlivened by a party of men lassoing cattle on a little plain, and leading them off tied with a long rope, one to the tail of each patient horse. On one side of the road, a large and valuable heap of iron pumps and large machinery, of one of the mining companies, was lying, quite secure from plunder by their great weight; and on the other, was a house or shed full of wheels and lighter stores, apparently unguarded and at the mercy of every traveller. Half a league further, and about a mile to the left of the road, is the Hacienda of Lucas Martin, once a *dépôt* of the Real del Monte Company's stores. In another league, on entering Xalapa, I paid the "Piage," or turnpike duty, of two reals for each laden or saddled animal, and eight dollars for the waggon, after which we en-

tered the town; and in the “Callejon del diamante,” the dirtiest and most disreputable street in the place, put up at the Meson kept by a man named Francesquini, and which, although not particularly sweet, and very expensive, possesses the merit of having regular waiters and good cookery, in addition to the most active and indefatigable race of fleas I ever encountered, even in the republic of Mexico.

Oct. 29.—I now became the daily guest of my kind friend Colonel Dashwood, Consul for Vera Cruz;—since, as I learnt by letters from the coast that no vessel was lying there, either for England or the United States, I saw no necessity for hastening to the Tierra Caliente, and braving the yellow fever.

Oct. 30.—With Colonel Dashwood as my guide I commenced my rambles about the beautiful environs of Xalapa; and we this morning strolled to the Chorro de San Pedro, a shady delicious dell, where we saw several women washing clothes in small tanks or basins, into which flowed clear little

streamlets trickling from the rising ground, which, with the dell and all the shady lanes round the city, was covered with closely embowering trees and clustering parasitic plants. Amongst these the broad light green foliage of the wild gourds, or chayotes, was the most abundant, and enlivened by clusters of bright scarlet and yellow flowers, with the deliciously fragrant tree-lily (called here Floricundio, or Lanternella). This is a large white bell-shaped flower, partaking in a softened degree the odour of the early blossoms of orange and lemon trees, which here acquire a great size, adding to the beauty and sweetness of the walks around Xalapa. These, with the broad shining leaves of the graceful Banana, springing amongst clusters of the dark-leaved wild Chiramoya, combined to form a natural garden, unequalled, or perhaps unexcelled, in the world. The wild berries and fruits attract several brilliant species of birds; and the delicate little "Chupa rosa"

* Rose-sucker, or "Chupa myrta" (myrtle-sucker), by which names the humming-bird is distinguished.

delights to feast on the honey of an endless variety of ever-blooming flowers.

Oct. 31.—We set out at an early hour, while the sky was still clear of clouds, and before the volcanos were covered with their daily cap of clouds, to the hill of Macoul-tepec (Five-hills) which rises with an irregular summit to about 400 feet above the elevation, and on the north side, of Xalapa. The lanes leading to it were such as I have just described; and passing these by a steep ascent, we reached a small look-out house on the top, from whence a superb panoramic view of the surrounding country is obtained. I had determined on sketching this; but when I had once gazed from the summit of Macoul-tepec, I closed my book in despair of even conveying the slightest idea of its grandeur. To the east my future route over the Tierra Caliente was dimly seen through a glowing hazy atmosphere, the warmth of which was strongly contrasted by long spiral columns of white smoke rising in various directions, where the farmers were clearing their lands of the now

parched and useless vegetation. A faint line of light showed us the ocean beyond Vera Cruz, which is frequently so clearly seen that vessels can be distinguished under sail upon it; the direct distance being but twelve leagues, although twenty-six must be passed to reach it. Far to the southward, beyond a chain of steep dark cliffs bounding the Barrancas, each in itself a mountain, rose Orizaba, of which the extreme magnitude is better seen from this point than from any other: to the left, and nearer, is the mountain of Perote, opposing its sombre forests of pines to the pure white summit of its mighty neighbour. On the right of Perote we could trace the broad causeway leading to Mexico, and bounded on either side by cultivated or forest lands, neat white villages, and haciendas. In the north arise an abrupt chain of darkly wooded Sierras, intersected by deep chasms and precipices; amongst which, in the direction of the valley of Helotepec, is a lofty cascade, from this distance appearing like a white pillar reared against the precipice. The base of

Macoul-tepec is surrounded by fertile plains and gardens; and to the south, a pretty bird's eye view is obtained of Xalapa. On the hill top I found the common blackberry entwined round the Chiramoya, in company with many brilliant flowers, the cherished yet degenerated favourites of our English hot-houses.

November 1.—This was the “Festividad de todos los Santos,” a grand feast-day; and the town in consequence was crowded with the natives of the neighbouring villages, in addition to its own gaily dressed multitude. In the morning the troops, preceded as usual by discordant trumpets, playing the never-to-be forgotten and eternal “Bravo’s march,” repaired to the church and heard mass; after which a merry bustle and confusion reigned throughout the day, and, contrary to the usual custom on religious festivals, Christianity was not outraged by a procession of the favourite and local idols. The market-place (Plaza del Mercado) was well supplied, and crowded with Indians, who, as in Mexico, were the chief traders;

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displaying their stores spread on mats in the full glare of the sun. The best season for fruits had passed away, yet I saw pine-apples at a medio each; guayavas also of various kinds, large ill-flavoured citrons, fine oranges, limes, and lemons, bad woolly apples and pears; chirimoyas, grapes, ahucates, sapote negro, plantains, bananas, walnuts, cocoa-nuts from Campeche, and the grena-dilla *, a delicious pear-shaped fruit containing a substance like the pulp of a white gooseberry. Vegetables too were abundant, and good varieties of gourds and pumpkins, of which the chayote (a wild rough species) is excellent; green and dry peas and beans, haricots, large white-heart cabbages; the common potatoe, the red and yellow camote (a sweet species), turnips, carrots, gigantic tasteless radishes, several varieties of Chili peppers and tomatas; onions, leeks, garlic, parsley, sweet herbs, frijoles, ears of maize, dried tamarinds and pumpkin-seeds. A few individuals sold salted fish; the robalo (resembling our coal-fish) from Campèche;

* The pod of a passion-flower.

lisa, a small caplin from Vera Cruz; huevina, a fresh-water kind, and the librandia and parga mulato (a long dark skinned fish) from the salt lake of San Carlos near the sea-coast. Dried carp were also in the market, and our Newfoundland cod was not wanting. Dried meat, in the usual uninviting coils, was heaped here and there, and the nose was refreshed by the steams from the cooking establishments of a row of busy old females who were providing messes for the hungry multitude. On the opposite quarter from the savoury dépôts were others, displaying ranges of large tumblers filled to the brim with pulque, orgeat, spirits, and tepachi, an insipid composition of the juice of pine-apples, mixed with water and "panela," the coarsest brown sugar of the country. Besides these refreshments was another, obtainable every day from men who carried it through the streets in large tin pails. This was most excellent iced milk and lemonade, for which the snow is procured early in the year from Perote, and in the autumn from Orizaba. On one side of

the market was ranged a temporary double row of booths, for the sale of white and fancy-coloured wax tapers, which were abundantly purchased by all those good Christians who purposed honouring *Todos los Santos* by an illumination after night-fall. Small tables covered with neat white cloths and tasteful displays of confectionery, were placed at the corners of the streets, and had a pretty effect, with little gay coloured paper banners waving over the dogs, lambs, and nondescripts of painted sugar, which were always surrounded by gazing groups of open-mouthed children. Xalapa indeed is celebrated for its dulces (sweets); but notwithstanding this high character, the fruits are all preserved in such a superabundance of coarse sugar, that every sweet-meat has precisely the same flavour. On one side of the market-square is a small dirty portal, where all sorts of toys and trinkets are sold; and here I purchased a bamboo small-tooth comb for four reales, which had been brought across the country from Acapulco, where it had been received from China; there were

several of these for sale, and they are much esteemed by the country-people. I also laid in a stock of another article, called "sweet earth," which is eaten by women—why or wherefore, I could not learn. It is actually formed of a kind of clay kneaded into little cakes, or figures of animals, with a kind of wax which exudes from the Sapote tree. I purchased some of these articles, which are esteemed because the clay of which they are compounded had been dug at the place where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared so miraculously to Juan Diego. The poor Indians, who sincerely adore this, the only Saint who has vouchsafed to show herself to one of their race, often eat the sacred earth, unmixed, upon the spot; and frequently mingle a lump of it with water, which they drink as a sovereign remedy against all ills. The meat, poultry, and game mart, of a very inferior description, is held in a regularly built square at a short distance from the other market, and inclosed by low walls, with seats, and an obelisk-shaped building in the centre. In this space the bull-fights are occasion-

ally held; and it was near the obelisk that Mr. McKenzie, the late Consul, had a man shot at his side, by a bullet evidently intended for himself, and fired from the ranks of the troops which were under review on some public occasion. On this present day of jubilee, all the Xalapenses were in their holiday apparel; and in dress, features, and general appearance, I think them by far the best specimens of the Mexican people. A great proportion of the ladies still adhere to the simply beautiful black Spanish dress, with the graceful veil, or Mantilla; but where they have done other Europeans the honour of imitating them, it is a bungling piece of business, and all sorts of finery and tawdry ornaments are to be seen blended in happy confusion on the same person. In the evening the open windows admitted of my hearing, in almost every house, exceedingly inharmonious airs upon very bad harps, and singing, in a slow, monotonous, nasal tone, by one, two, or more voices, all in the same key. Xalapa, which is said to signify the "issue of the waters" (*de onde sale*

el agua), is one of the neatest and cleanest places I have seen in Mexico. Its streets are for the most part short, and somewhat irregular. This is rendered more apparent, by the situation of the town on some little hills. The houses, which are not remarkable on account of size, are for the most part of a superior order; roofed with red grooved tiles, well whitewashed and windowed without, and neatly furnished within; although the old Spanish precaution, of an iron grating at each window, gives them rather a gloomy appearance. The population consists of about 11,000 persons, and is very respectable; although not to be compared with what it was a few years since, when it was the custom of the rich Spanish merchants of Vera Cruz to retire to their country-houses in this charming spot*, during the sickly season on the coast. Xalapa is the seat of government for the State of Vera Cruz, and as such, is the residence of General Barragan, its governor. A garrison of about 1000

* Colonel Dashwood favoured me with a copy of his thermometrical register, of which I copy the mean temperature

men, cavalry and infantry, are constantly stationed in the town; but their barracks are in the suburbs.

The Xalapa washing has been much praised; and I can testify, at least, for its dearness, and the success of the women in thumping off all the shirt-buttons which remained after my seven months' campaign in the country. There are two public places set apart for washing; the largest, named Techacapa, has three long, roofed and commodious buildings, supported on pillars, and open in all directions. Through these, a stream of fine water runs continually on either side, at a convenient height for the washerwomen; and as the little canal is divided into compartments, one for the clothes, and another next it for the washing, it

of six months, which will give an idea of the great equality in the range of the thermometer:

	6 A.M.	Noon.	8 P.M.
May	69°	73°	71°
June	67	70	69
July	68	72	69
August	68	72	70
September	65	68	68
October	62	65	64

is very clean and comfortable. The second place, Jalitiquic, has but one house, at the foot of a little cliff, surrounded and shaded by fine orange and other picturesque trees.

I have already spoken of the markets, and but little remains to be said of the trade. Xalapa in the present day being merely a kind of resting-place between Vera Cruz and Mexico, with little commerce of its own, presents a striking contrast to the time when, under the Spanish Government, it was the emporium of the Atlantic trade. The Spanish merchants, protected by the exclusion of all foreign competitors, then sold at an exorbitant price the produce of Europe ; and some of the most splendid fortunes realized in New Spain, owe their rise to the trade of Vera Cruz and Xalapa. The poor Indian now finds within his reach and his power of purchase, the luxuries and comforts which his poverty once denied him ; and the abundance and cheapness of English linens, clothing, and ornaments, now leads the natives to perceive that there are other powerful nations, in addition

to that of their persecuting conquerors. Xalapa, however, possesses some very well-supplied shops, and is famous for its commerce in medicinal jalap, which is brought by the Indians from a Sierra near the foot of Perote, where the plant, of which it is the root, grows in great abundance. At this period it was selling at about three quartillos, (equal to four-pence halfpenny,) the pound. The Indians who bring in the roots, and who are also traders in fruits and vegetables, are a quiet, inoffensive, unobtrusive race; differing materially in dress and appearance from the aborigines of the Northern States.

The habit of the men consists of a dark blue woollen manufactured by themselves, and formed into a kind of tunic with broad open sleeves, and generally tied round the waist by a sash or cord. They wear no shirts: and the other clothing is simply a pair of short blue breeches, open at the knee. Straw hats are worn by all; and the back hair is suffered to hang wildly over the shoulders, while that in front is cut formally across the forehead.

The women wear a coarse cotton shift with broad open sleeves, and sometimes fancifully worked about the neck in bright-coloured worsted; petticoats drawn in numerous gathers round the waist, and very full below, of the blue woollen; and a blue or brown Reboso (or wrapper) of the same material over the shoulders. Their hair is divided into two long pigtails, generally interwoven with bright scarlet worsted; and it is the custom either to tie the extreme ends of these ornaments together, and let them hang down the back, or to bind them tightly round the head, which has a peculiar and rather pleasing effect. These poor people are a plain or even ugly race, and for the most part clumsily formed; which awkwardness of appearance is increased by the habit of walking with their toes turned in. The women work as constantly and laboriously as the men; and both sexes carry great burthens by the strength of the head and neck, from whence the loads are suspended by straps, so as to rest upon the loins, while the body is in a very stooping posture.

In Xalapa there are three churches. That of San Francisco, with its monastery, was one of the earliest erected after the Conquest, as an inscription mentions, by D. Luis de Alasco, in 1556. It is now sinking into decay; a long crack appears in the roof, and no efforts have been made to prevent its extending still further. The building itself is interesting, and the ancient carving of some of the shrines remarkable; particularly the figures of the Virgin, and some male saint dressed in the full Spanish costume of the time of the Conquest. There are now but three friars remaining, of the mendicant Franciscans, attached to the monastery; and their number, from the state of the times, is not likely to be speedily increased.

I was fortunate in making the acquaintance of one of these Padres, (an intelligent, worthy man,) who had travelled over the greater part of Mexico; was intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of its people, and well versed in the history of the revolution, particularly where Iturbide, to whom he was for some years chaplain, was concerned.

He was a self-taught, well-read man, and, moreover, the author of several pamphlets, of which he gave me copies of the last two, on subjects very different from each other. One was "Manifiesto sobre la Inutilidad de los Provinciales de las Religiones en esta America *;" the other, "Explicacion campesina sobre la Cria y Manejo de los Caballos†;" for, contrary to all order, he owned a wealthy Hacienda, and was particularly choice in the breed of his horses, of which I saw some very beautiful ones. The name and title of my friend was "El R. P. P. Fr. Juan Rosillo de Mier Cuautemoczin Frayle del Orden de San Francisco."

The Parroquial, which stands on one side of the Plaza del Mercado, must be considered as the principal church; and the simplicity of its internal ornaments and architecture is very striking. It is built on low arched aisles, and is also one of the

* "Manifiesto on the Inutility of Provincial Clergy of various Religious Orders in this America."

† "A country Explanation of the Method of breeding and rearing Horses."

early edifices of the country. I walked in on a fast-day, when it was most fully and respectably attended; and at the door a kind of religious pedlar had erected his stand, from which he was selling, very successfully, little gaudy rosaries and crucifixes, and small lumps of blessed wax. San José is the third church; and there are two chapels, one of El Calvario, the other of Santiago. In addition to these regular establishments, there are two other religious houses: "El Beaterio," a female college, whence the young women are allowed to marry; and "San Ygnacio," which is now building as a penitentiary for both sexes, in separate establishments. Their admission and discharge are voluntary; but they are received only on the recommendation of the priests, who exact a fee for the permission. A Lancasterian school for 220 boys has recently been established; and there are two other boys' schools on the plan of the country, each to contain 100, under the protection of the Ayuntamiento. There is but one school for girls. It is to be hoped that educa-

tion will rapidly advance in this State ; for the Congress has offered a salary of 2500 dollars for a master in Xalapa school, and 3000 dollars for one at Vera Cruz ; and has issued also a general order, that every town in the State should establish a Lancasterian school, the master of which is to be paid by the municipality. There is, besides, some idea of instituting a reading-room and subscription library at Xalapa, after the example of Orizaba, which is, perhaps, the only town in the whole Republic where such an establishment exists ; amusements of a literary nature not being as yet in vogue among the families here. Their only evening resource, except gaming and music, is, parading in whole groups through the streets, or on the most uninteresting spot near Xalapa, called “ The Verros ;” a low damp field, without a single charm to recommend it.—My impatience had now increased to the utmost, at being detained in consequence of no vessel being ready to sail from Vera Cruz. I determined, therefore, on going down to the coast, that I might

feel myself as near as possible to dear distant England.

Nov. 7.—Resisting the kind invitations of Colonel and Mrs. Dashwood to prolong my stay, I this day set out from the beautiful Xalapa. Passing out of the town by the “Calle de la preciosa Sangre de Christo *,” which is inscribed in rude letters on the house whence the younger Mr. Bullock took his view of the town, we pursued our way over a broad paved causeway in a litera, (such as is common in Spain and Italy,) the most general conveyance between Xalapa and Vera Cruz. The body is mounted on two strong poles, secured in thick leather straps to the peculiarly shaped saddles of a pair of strong mules; the one in front is led by a man, mounted on a third mule on the off side; and the animal in the rear, as well as having its halter fastened to the back of the litera, is kept to its work by the whip of a driver, who has also charge of two or three loose beasts, the carriers being changed every four or five leagues. The

* Street of the precious Blood of Christ.

body of the vehicle is sufficiently long and broad for the traveller to stretch out on a small mattress, or to sit beneath the roof, which is supported on little pillars, and inclosed at pleasure by light curtains. The motion soon ceases to be unpleasant if the mules keep an equal ambling pace. Should one of them trot, the effect is above all things disagreeable to the traveller who has just entered on the *Tierra Caliente*, after a residence in the milder and more elevated regions. In three leagues, the thick wilderness of plants began to diminish; and on a bare space we stopped at "Encéro," which not long since was a dépôt for the transport stores of the Real del Monte Company. Here we breakfasted, and were joined by five other literas, conveying a native family to Vera Cruz. They travelled with most amusing pomp, monopolizing all the provisions and attention of the people at the little Mesons and shops on the road; noticing me occasionally by a condescending nod, as I was making my meals on what they refused, having heard that I was a poor

discharged miner from a broken Company, who was finding his way to England. Two leagues beyond Encéro is the Rancho of Coral Falso, where is a building resembling a signal-post. Here the Petaya or Organo began to appear amidst thickets of varied mimosas. The sugar-cane is cultivated not far from the road side, and oaks are no longer seen. The country very rapidly assumes a tropical character, and near Cerro Gordo slight bamboos begin to abound. The huts are formed of them, attached to light frames in the same manner as those at Tampico and the river Panuco. Heavy rain and a fresh breeze had taught me the discomforts of a litera under such circumstances; for the wet streaming curtains flapped continually in my face, and my bedding was completely soaked through. At four leagues and a half from Encéro, we stopped and dined at Plan del Rio, where a pretty bridge is erected across a small and at this time beautifully transparent river, running over a rocky bed through a picturesque Barranca, whose rich woods overhung

the stream on either side. On a rising woody knoll is a small square fortress commanding the dell, and which was used in the revolution. From El Plan we ascended to a good unpaved road; and with the exception of a short space, at the ascent of Calera, it continued with us to Puente del Rey, four leagues and a half further. To the southward of Calera, and at a short distance from the road are said to exist a number of Mexican idols, deposited there by the Indians on their conversion to Christianity. An old man who lives at the foot of Calera, and follows the occupation of a hunter, can, it is said, give information about them.

We reached Puente del Rey* by the light of a brilliant moon and stars, and I wandered out to look at this stupendous work of the Spaniards. It is a flat bridge, of the most perfect and solid masonry, paved with the greatest nicety, and being built at a bend of the river is slightly incurvated to suit the approaches. It crosses over a wild and deep

* Bridge of the King.

ravine, through which the rapid Rio Antigua (Old River) tumbles impetuously among rugged rocks, overhung by clusters of the fine shrubs and trees peculiar to the Tierra Caliente. I did not lament the absence of day-light in visiting this beautiful place, where the effect of the silvery moon-light on rock, wood, and stream, was infinitely grand and striking. To this picture may be added the six literas, planted on the road, as the bed-places of their employers, in front of a few scattered huts, all brightly illuminated and devoted to the sale of food and refreshments for travellers. At a short distance from the road were also to be seen long heaps of bales, and rows of mule-saddles of requas, thus far on their way to the capital; groups of muleteers, wild-looking but merry fellows, cooking their suppers by little fires on the ground; others drinking, singing, gambling, or flirting with the active shop-girls, who were all bustle in attending to their customers.

Nov. 8.—We moved over the fine bridge at four A.M. and found the road tolerably good for

mules, but almost impassable for carriages of any description until we reached Paso de Ovejas, where a small bridge crosses a stream running through a very pretty ravine. At about one mile and a half to the right of the road on the N. E. side of the valley, and a short walk from the Paso, some remains of an ancient Mexican city are still to be found*. At the Paso and in its vicinity the huts are thatched with the branches and leaves of a large species of Palm, called by the natives "Palma de Coso Real," and which I never observed in the Tierra Caliente near Tampico. This tree seldom acquires much trunk, but its graceful leaves are of an immense size, and it produces a cluster of round fruits, outwardly resembling green walnuts.

* These are situated on the edge of the plateau, above the valley of Paso de Ovejas, and are of considerable extent. All that remains are the traces of streets and inclosures, and an assemblage of pyramidal elevations of earth and stones of various sizes, some of them forty feet in height. The frail materials of which the houses were composed have entirely disappeared. My state of health did not allow me to visit this place, from which I understand the view to be magnificent.

The hard outer pulp adheres to a small stone containing a sweet white kernel, something resembling our garden root "rampion" in flavour. Thick underwood gives place in this neighbourhood to small patches of plains, devoted to the pasturage of brood mares and cattle, and the road becomes extremely bad on descending La Bajada de Toluma to a woody dell, from which rise a number of verdant table-topped mounds. In a shady hollow we passed over the pretty streamlet and bridge, called Talon, whence a very muddy road lay through a wilderness of palms and other graceful trees, of which we could only discern the tops, the trunks being entirely hidden by the thick clusters of wild gourds and the festoons of bright purple and pink convolvuluses. Large flights of parrots, the chichalaca, and various kinds of doves, whirled constantly past us in the shady road, where we enjoyed all the beauties of the Tierra Caliente without suffering from its oppressive heat. On a small open space we breakfasted at a few huts called Manantial, and then pursuing

our pleasing route, arrived at the huts of Santa Fé, so much abused by all travellers that arrive in Mexico who visit the capital and return by the same road. I feel it a charitable duty to this contemned place to say, that its comforts are fully equal to those afforded by some of the Villas (towns) in the Northern States. From hence to Vera Cruz is said to be three leagues; and we again plunged into the thickets, through muddy, bad, and flooded roads. In two leagues more we heard the breaking of the sea, and having emerged from our shade and wound round a large sand-hill, descended to the beach, on which a few huts, named Bengara, are situated. A strong norther was blowing, and a heavy surf broke along the line of coast, while the island castle of San Juan de Ulua and a cluster of shipping beneath its walls, with the city of Vera Cruz terminating the long yellow line of sand, formed an extremely pretty picture of about four miles in depth.—I had now traversed the much-condemned route between Vera Cruz and Mexico, by the way of Real del

Monte ; and from experience can affirm that it is the most beautiful, most civilized, comfortable, and convenient route in the whole of the Mexican Republic. Let those who detract from it, take their next trip to the interior *viá* Tampico and Zacatecas, and then, having made the comparison, give their opinion upon it.

We entered Vera Cruz in the afternoon ; and while I was bribing the Custom-house officer from my Litera, not to detain me by opening my portmantaus, one of the soldiers of the guard very deliberately unstrapped my cloak from a led horse and walked off with it ; but I afterwards recovered my property, by the thief's offering to sell it to my own servant, who was on his way to make inquiries.

I was conducted by the Litera-men to a nasty Meson,—the worst in fact I had seen, which is saying a great deal ; and reached a room without lock, key, or window, by paths which I shall not attempt to describe.

Nov. 9.—In the evening, however, my friends procured me, for the following day, a room in the

only inn I had hitherto met with, and in which was a coffee-room, a public table, and the first civilized comforts I had enjoyed out of a private house. I occupied my day in roaming about, and met at dinner at Mr. Welsh's my friend Captain Gosset of the Ferret, who had brought the mail.

Nov. 10.—My day was prefaced by the great luxury of a bathe in the sea, in a spot entirely protected from sharks. As the natives are not much addicted to ablutions of any kind, they are for the most part ignorant of the place. I therefore, for the information of those who visit Vera Cruz, think it but charity to give them notice that this valuable spot is within the reef, and immediately beyond the northern Baluarte, or battery, which flanks the city.

This morning I attended with several of our countrymen the funeral of a young gentleman who had just been carried off by the Vomito. He was buried amongst some bushes in an open space to the S. W. of the town, near the Campo Santo,

which could not, of course, afford repose to the body of a heretic, and gives indeed but little protection to those of the "true religion;"—a peep through the ruined door discovering hundreds of whitened skulls scattered at random upon the ground, while the usual troops of familiar carrion vultures roam undisturbed amidst the crumbling bones.

My earliest walk was generally to the Mole, where a stranger can never fail of being interested in watching the bustle and activity which prevails. Crowds of Negro porters are in constant motion, discharging and carrying the cargoes of boats to the Custom-house within the gates, where a noisy concourse of cart-men are scrambling and quarrelling for the chance of employment; their pay, as well as that of the porters, is very high, many of them earning five and six dollars in a day.

The carts for the conveyance of merchandize are on two wheels, with an enormous breadth of axle, which gives them a clumsy and remark-

able appearance. They are drawn by three mules abreast, the driver riding on the near one, which has longer traces than its fellows, so as to allow the man's right leg to hang before the end of the shaft.

Boats are as expensive as labour and carriage, and in fine weather lie on either side the Mole, from which a number of men and boys are constantly fishing, either with casting-nets or simple rods and lines. They are generally very successful; and amidst the varieties of fish which I saw taken, I remember the names of Mojarra, Rouco, Barbudo, and Xurél, none of which possessed any particular brilliancy of colour. I was not, in fact, so fortunate as to see any of those "gems" of the finny tribe, which I was led to suppose I should have found in great abundance.

I one morning saw about 150 Presidarios, or convicts, embarked from the Mole for Campeachy; and whether from knowing them to be culprits, or from their true appearance, I think I never saw a more villainous set of faces: and

as some of them were very ill-clothed, their bare arms, backs, and breasts, exhibited many scars of the knife-fights, which are so common with the class from which these prisoners had been taken.

I made some excursions entirely round the walls, which so completely and closely surround the town that the free circulation of air is impeded ; and this must in a great measure increase, if not create, the pestilence which annually commits such havoc. The custom of leaving dead animals close to the walls has in a great degree been discontinued ; yet some are at times found near the roadways, attended during the day by numbers of vultures, while at night their brother-scavengers the coyotes (or jackals) come in for the remnant of the feast, and their shrill yells and snarlings as they revel in a body may be heard to a great distance. The south-western corner of the town, at which the extensive barracks are situated, has suffered much from the attacks of the first insurgents who took the place from the Spaniards ; and in return some batteries in that quarter have de-

stroyed a church, and a vast number of detached buildings. The defensive sea wall has been much battered by the shot of San Juan de Ulua; and two Baluartes, (or small round batteries,) at the extremes, are absolutely shattered to pieces. The Alameda, which is the only public walk, is a broad pavement to the southward of the town, and from the exposed state of the coast, or want of attention of the natives, is unshaded by a single tree. Here on Sundays and festivals the beauty and fashion of Vera Cruz, who dress very gaily, and for the most part as Europeans, are accustomed to assemble in great numbers.

About a mile to the southward of Vera Cruz is a marshy and verdant tract, for which no one has been just enough to give the place credit. The country is here in many places covered with a short sweet grass, sufficient for the support of a number of cattle, and bearing bushes and small trees of a healthy appearance.

The soil at this season was in most places swampy; and even in the parching heats of sum-

mer, water is said to abound. There are numerous spots in this green patch, on which excellent gardens could be established; and any industrious and enterprising man, proof against the Vomito, might easily rear more than sufficient vegetables for the supply of the city and shipping. A long irregular morass or lake, of small depth and in many places filled with tall rushes, lies immediately beyond the ground of which I speak, and in it were a party of men who hauled a small seine with considerable success, taking three kinds of fish; the Naquara, Guavina, and Xuile, as well as a remarkable species of fresh-water tortoise having three elevated longitudinal ridges on its upper shell. Of these amphibiae there are other varieties, as well as a few small alligators; and great quantities of aquatic birds make the lake their occasional residence. On the water which flooded the shoaler parts of the morass, through which I waded with my gun, were large quantities of floating untenanted shells of the genera *Ampullaria* and *Planorbis*, and I looked in vain for one with an animal in it.

On the side of a lofty sand-hill to the southward of the swamp, are still to be seen the ruins of a fortress or castle, said to have been the residence of a certain Doña Beatriz, foundress of Vera Cruz *, and inhabited by her, until the city was completed.

The lake, which supplies the town by means of an aqueduct almost buried beneath the flat soil, is usually termed "The Laguna," or "Los Cocos," and its waters could easily be appropriated to irrigation on its banks. While roaming about this place, I was joined by an officer of the Ferret, who continued his search for game after I had returned homeward: but scarcely was I out of sight, when having fired at a bird he immediately heard a ball from amongst the tall rushes whiz past his head; and as he who shot it was not to be seen, this gentleman very prudently retired before a second attempt should be made upon his life. It is remarkable that on a former occasion, a companion of this same officer was fired at under similar circumstances.

* I have been unable to find the name of this lady in either Bernal Diaz, Clavigero, or Solis.

I was much pleased with the city, or, as it is now termed in all official documents, "The Heroic City" of Vera Cruz. Many of the houses are excellent; its streets are straight and spacious; and were it somewhat cleaner, and repaired from the devastating effects of the shot and shells of the castle, would be a magnificent place. The paving is very good, and every street has a raised footway on each side, of a convenient breadth and peculiar construction. A ledge of cut stones bounds the intended path, and the space between it and the houses is filled with a fine cement of lime, sand, and shells, which equals stone in hardness and durability, and even acquires a polish from the feet of passengers. Houses are extravagantly dear in their construction and rent, which last, for the better sort, is generally 3000 dollars per annum. The building of one of these is rarely accomplished under 100,000 dollars. This high price is owing to the scarcity of materials; the belt of sand which stretches between the city and the interior preventing the

transport of stone or bricks; every thing, therefore, must come from the seaward*. The principal article of construction is a porous white coral, which composes the numerous reefs off the coast, and is usually found in large rounded masses.

The houses of Vera Cruz are all flat-topped, and covered with cement; and however the streets may be neglected, they are kept studiously clean, as the receptacles for supplying rain-water to the tanks or *Algibés* with which every house of consequence is furnished, and which hold sufficient water for two or three years consumption. All the principal buildings have also a *Mirador*, or little watch-turret, on their roofs, from which a good view is obtained and a fresher air inhaled. To these places the members of families resort in the cool of the evening; and the anxious merchant hence looks out upon the coming sail, which is announced by the bell of the church of San Francisco tolling

* A number of squared blocks, of a yard each, of a very compact sandstone, which were lying near the Mole for its repair, cost sixty dollars each.

five times, so that by this very judicious plan the news is published to all the town.

The Plaza of Vera Cruz is small and not remarkable. On two sides it has Portales;—to the east stands the Government-house, an old Moorish-looking building; and on the south is the Parroquial in a sad state of decay, but now undergoing some repairs. Its interior possesses nothing of interest beyond a ghastly figure of the Saviour, painted of a darker brown than any Indian, nay, almost black, with immensely long hair, and almost disgustingly battered and bloody. Great merit was formerly attached to this idol, but the Vera Cruzanos are now less credulous.

Off the S. E. corner of the Plaza is a neat little fountain *, at the entrance to the Plaza de Verduras, where a tolerable market is held, in which on every side I saw for the first time covered green-grocers' stalls. Cabbages are here sold by the

* It is generally supposed that Vera Cruz is almost destitute of water. This is not the case: it has abundance conveyed to it by an aqueduct from the Lagoon; but not being of a wholesome quality, rain-water is generally used.

half or quarter, and a whole one of good quality costs four reales *; a large onion a medio †; and every other article of life in the same proportion.

There are hospitals for the sick, which I did not visit, as the Vomito was still very prevalent, and deaths were frequent; and one or two declining establishments of friars. A theatre, somewhat smaller than any of those in our country villages, is in progress of erection, and the Vera Cruzanos promise to re-establish their city in its ancient splendour. The population by a recent census was 8000, to which may be added about 1000 soldiers. The Presidarios, or convicts, are not included in this computation, as they may justly be termed a fluctuating population, the poor wretches dying in great numbers from the effects of hard work, poor diet, and an unhealthy climate to which they are unaccustomed ‡.

The trade of Vera Cruz has of late retrograded most deplorably, owing to the excessive and inju-

* Equal to 2s. 3d.

† About 3½d.

‡ They are usually from the internal provinces.

diciously imposed duties, which have obliged the principal mercantile houses to revoke their orders for shipment; so that the very means which the Mexican financiers have adopted in hopes of increasing the revenue, have most effectually and irremediably injured it.

Nov. 23.—Preparations which had long been making for the celebration of the first anniversary of the fall of the Castle of San Juan de Ulua were on this day put in force. Salutes from the ships and castle announced before daylight the joyful event, and processions and fire-works were not spared. The Plaza was occupied by a triumphal Temple of Victory, and an artificial Castle of Ulua was erected on the Mole, where it fell gloriously under a heavy fire of squibs and crackers. Poor General Barragan also formed part of the show, and paraded through all the streets bearing a silk flag, and attended by soldiers marching the balance step.

Nov. 26.—Illness prevented my attending at all the merry-makings, but I saw on the third and

last evening the closing scene:—"Vera Cruz Triunfante," the "Heroic City" * being personated by a young lady habited as a tragedy queen, supported on one side by General Barragan in full uniform, and on the other by a judge in a full suit of court mourning.

The car in which the pretty little Genius of Vera Cruz was to have passed through the streets having been very ill made, she was robbed of half the glory of her appearance, and obliged to walk, preceded by two slaves † who were liberated for the occasion, and dressed in white; these were flanked by two little puppet-show children, one personifying Mars, the other Mercury, but which gay personages with their bright tinsel ornaments were taken by some of the mob for San Pedro and San Francisco. A band of music led the van; and a double line of about two hundred well-

* Literally so expressed in all public documents.

† I was not aware until this period that a single slave, or even permission to retain them, existed in the Republic of Mexico; but now learnt that there were some few in Vera Cruz.

dressed people attended with large lighted wax candles.

Thirteen thousand dollars were at this festival expended in fire-works and exhibitions; while a ruined mole, fallen batteries, unrepaired public buildings, and unpaid troops, bespoke the poverty of the State. But the good people of Vera Cruz, and in fact all Mexicans, dearly love a show; and I must confess are the best regulated and most orderly multitude on these occasions that I ever saw.

It is but natural and gratifying to a people who have so recently burst their fetters, to exceed a little in their demonstrations of joy; and if they had at this period been rather more humble in their accounts of these great doings, more credit would have attached to them*.

Nov. 30.—I drove in a “Volante†” to Mocam-

* The Gazettes teemed with nothing but the heroic actions of the natives, and their prowess in taking Ulua (which, had the garrison not been starved out, would never have surrendered); but above all, their military were compared, and said to be equal to the Guard of Napoleon in their brightest days, “or the scarcely less celebrated infantry of Prussia.”

† This vehicle very much resembles the calèche of Malta,

bo Point, at which the weighty machinery of the Real del Monte Company was landed in so masterly a manner by Mr. Colquhoun of the Royal Artillery.

Mocambo lies about four miles to the southward of Vera Cruz, and is immediately opposite the Island of Sacrificios, which before the period of the Conquest was so celebrated for its temple and numerous idols, many of which have of late been discovered and sent to Mexico.

In the evening I was at an extremely well attended ball at the Government-house. The ladies were prettily dressed, and the gentlemen had paid much attention to their toilette. No smoking, by either ladies or gentlemen, was permitted in the ball-room, which was spacious, well lighted, and very neatly furnished; and the whole display was extremely pleasing.

Dec. 1.—By the kind permission of General Bar-

and is supported on two enormously large wheels, which are placed behind the body. It is drawn by three mules, on the same plan as the carts which I before described.

ragan I visited the castle of San Juan de Ulua, which is too well known for me to attempt a description of it. The shot from the batteries of Vera Cruz appear to have done it no injury; and its spacious works, immense water-tanks, and fine position, cannot be too much admired. The sea-approach is defended by several extensive reefs, but the inner side opposite the city has deep water; and large brass rings are fixed into the walls as moorings for men-of-war, which lie completely sheltered from the tremendous "Northers." The Mexican squadron commanded by Commodore Porter lay at this time under the walls, and consisted of a frigate of thirty-two guns, a twenty-four gun-brig, with two of eighteen, and some schooners.

Dec. 3.—On this day they moved to the Island of Sacrificios preparatory to a cruise.

A convoy of a million and a half of dollars having recently arrived from the interior, the merchant-vessels which had been waiting for freight had now received them, and on the morrow I was to sail, after having passed four anxious weeks at

Vera Cruz in waiting for a passage. During this period the "Nortes" had been frequent and heavy ; but notwithstanding their character of purifying the air, the Vomito had by no means disappeared, and several deaths had occurred amongst Europeans, or natives from the interior, who, it is said, are more liable to this dreadful malady than foreigners. The temperature during the above time was, with the exception of three or four hours in the middle of the day, rather agreeable than otherwise. The average range of the thermometer was from 86° to 92° ; but during the gales it usually fell to 75° , which was considered as cold by many of the long resident English, who astonished me by closing their doors and windows, and in many instances putting on warmer clothing.

Dec. 4.—On the 4th of December I embarked in the United States brig Brown ; on the 23rd we reached New York ; on the 24th I again sailed for England in the packet ship Panthea ; and on the 14th of January was wrecked, in company with H.M.B. Nimrod, at Holyhead, in the tremendous

hurricane which blew on that day. Most providentially all hands were saved, after many anxious hours' exposure; and with some difficulty and considerable personal danger I saved the dispatches with which I had charged myself for Mr. Canning*. In four days more I was fortunate enough to recover the papers of the Real del Monte Company; with this my unpretending journal, and my drawings. Many papers and articles of value were lost, notwithstanding the unceasing exertions of many friends at Holyhead, whose hospitality and kindness can never be forgotten by me.

* To Captain Hugh Evans, harbour-master of Holyhead, I am deeply indebted for his humanity and gallantry in saving myself and some others by means of his boat, veered from the mole into the tremendous sea which was breaking over the ship.

CHAPTER XII.

General Account of the Inhabitants—Creoles—Rancheros or Vaqueros (Herdsman)—Arrieros or Muleteers—Indians—State of Law—Laws relating to the Mines—Usual Food of the Labouring Classes—Character of the People of the Country—Dwellings—Manufactures—Amusements—Agriculture.

HAVING been eight months in the Republic of Mexico, it is almost requisite to offer some description of its inhabitants, who in many respects may be considered as a very remarkable race of people. The Creoles, or descendants of Europeans, are by their circumstances the most eminent persons in New Spain, and, with the exception of those engaged in active commerce, are an indolent, overbearing, haughty race, who, with the ignorance which the barbarous policy of Spain has entailed upon them, have preserved also the most profound contempt for the poor despised Indians; and in fact

for every one without their own particular pale. They are, with some bright and gifted exceptions (whom, were it proper, I could enumerate with the greatest pleasure), the least estimable people in the country ; although, from the influx of strangers and intercourse with the old world generally, there is every reason to expect and hope for a material improvement. The establishment of schools will accomplish much towards this ; but above all, the improvement and softening of manners will be proportioned to the proper estimation in which the women are held ; and I am happy to say that they begin to assume their proper station in society. Their education is now better attended to ; and the alliances which have been formed between some of our countrymen and young ladies of family must have the most beneficial results.

Smoking, gaming, and the want of proper attention to personal cleanliness, will soon disappear ; and with a little humility (for there are few people in the world who have a better opinion of themselves), the Mexican gentry of the present day may

very speedily take intellectual precedence of their ancestors.

The rich picturesque costumes of both sexes are now growing into disrepute, and European fashions generally prevail in the principal cities.

The Rancheros or Vaqueros, who are a mixed race of Creole and Indian blood, may be considered as the yeomen of the country, and live in the extensive cattle-plains, or in the cultivated yet retired districts, content in their cabin of mud or stakes,—lively, brave, good-tempered, profoundly ignorant, and careless of every thing beyond their immediate occupations. The revolutionary war, which for a season called them from their retreats, has not a little disturbed the pastoral comforts of their life, and has but too frequently changed the quiet husbandman into a most barbarous and blood-thirsty soldier: but time will remedy this, and the Mexican farmers will probably return to their own peculiar pursuits with the advantage of a better and more enlightened age. There is an independence and fearlessness of man-

ner in the legitimate Ranchero, which is very imposing and pleasing ; and as he sallies forth in the gray of the morning to review his herds of cattle, on his active little horse, and cased in his short leather jacket and boots, with the ready lasso at his saddle-bow, he presents the most pleasing picture of health and happiness. His frame is generally light, active, and sinewy *; and the poorness of his diet on Tortillas and an occasional lump of Tasajo or sun-dried beef, maintains him in a state of body capable of enduring great fatigue. His chief fault is a propensity to get very tipsy whenever it is in his power, but he is generally good-humoured; and the murderous broils so frequent in the towns are rarely heard of in the Ranchos or Haciendas. The wives and daughters of this class of people live a most retired life ; and there is little variety in their occupations of grinding maize and making Tortillas, spinning and sometimes weaving ; except on Sundays and religious festivals, when, attired

* Some, however, of the Vaqueros of the Tierra adentro are quite as tall and muscular figures as our Yorkshiremen.

in their gayest clothes, they walk, or are conveyed on the same horses with the men of the family, to the nearest church village, where having heard mass and purchased all which they required at the market, they join in the crowded and monotonous fandango peculiar to the country, and which frequently continues all night. The female costume consists of a white shirt with short sleeves, and petticoats very full below, thickly plaited above, which are tied tight immediately over the hips. In this article of dress the most gaudy colours are preferred; and even richly worked muslin and gaudy French silks have here and there found their way into the most retired parts of the country. They all use a kind of shawl or Reboso, which is invariably worn over the head, and covers the bust and shoulders. The hair is smoothly parted in front, and amongst the young women generally well kept. A passion for gaudy coloured shoes, which contrast oddly with the nut-brown ankles, is universal with old and young on great occasions; and I have seen whole beves of girls

trudging barefoot to the merry-makings, and carrying their sky-blue or yellow shoes in their hands.

The Arrieros or Muleteers are an offset from the Rancheros : but their mode of life is very peculiar and enduring ; since, in their constant journeyings, whether they travel in the burning low lands, or in the most elevated, cold, and misty regions of the great Cordillera, they rarely sleep under a roof ; but, having cooked their very frugal meal near the cargo in their charge, they lie down amidst their mules' equipage, sheltered from the rain by a piece of coarse Petate or sacking. The mules meanwhile are sent out to pasture under the care of one of the party, who attends them throughout the night ; and at day-break half-a-dozen Arrieros will commence, and in two hours saddle and securely load fifty or sixty of these useful animals. The proverbial honesty of the Mexican Arrieros is to the present day unimpaired ; and, with but few exceptions, withstood the test of the late troubled times. Many of them pique themselves on their vocation, which is very frequently

hereditary; and men of extensive property will be found conveying merchandise through the country on their own mules. I confess that of all the natives of Mexico, the Arrieros are my favourites. I have always found them to be civil, nay courteous, obliging, cheerful, and perfectly honest: and their character in this latter respect may be estimated by the knowledge of the fact, that thousands and even millions of dollars have frequently been confided to their charge, which they in many instances have defended, at the hazard of their lives, against those bands of robbers which the local government have now succeeded in dispersing*. The constantly varying life of the Arrieros gives them an acuteness beyond that of others of their countrymen; and their knowledge of men and places instills a liberality of feeling which is very rare in New Spain.

* The system and division of labour among the Arrieros, their customs, and the laws by which they govern themselves, are remarkably well adapted to the occupation of this important and useful class.

The last on the list of society are the poor Indians,—a mild, enduring, and despised race of people, who with care are capable of receiving the best impressions. The memory of their former free state seems stamped upon their serious countenances; and when excited during the revolutionary war, their courage, passions and devotedness were very remarkable; as, under the guidance of their priests, they took up arms against their ancient oppressors. They for the most part lead a pastoral and retired life, cultivating the fruits in the mighty Barrancas, or assembling in little villages, where they manufacture cloth and various articles of earthenware, and rear poultry for the markets. They have preserved their race unmixed with Spanish blood, and but few even speak the Spanish language. In their commerce with the towns they are always to be seen in groups; and I do not ever remember to have seen a pure Indian walking with a white man. They differ somewhat in costume in each particular State; but the general habit is a short tunic, of dark brown or blue wool-

len, confined round the waist, with breeches of the same material;—a profusion of thick black hair spreads itself over the neck and shoulders. All wear black or straw hats; but few of them make use of shoes, supplying their place by a rude kind of sandal. The women wear the same coloured woollens as the men; but generally use a white shirt, fancifully ornamented round the neck with a border of coloured worsted, and a short kind of cloak, which, unlike that of the Creole females, is worn over the shoulders. The hair is usually divided into two large and long pigtails, having red or other coloured worsted interwoven with them, and the ends are frequently joined in a bow, so as to hang over the loins: some wear these tresses tightly bound round the head, which has a good effect, heightened occasionally by the addition of some simple wild flower. In stature the Indians are for the most part slightly formed, out-kneed, and of an ungraceful carriage; their features plain, or even ugly; and their complexion of a deep dingy brown. Their intellect has never hitherto

been fairly tried, but great docility to their instructors might be expected; as they look up with particular veneration to their priests, who sway them unboundedly by that religion which was introduced after the Conquest, and so modified to their prejudices and intellects as to resemble in many respects, as far as the blind worship of uncouth images is concerned, the idolatry of their ancestors.

It is, I believe, the general opinion that the Indian population is now rapidly decreasing; yet I could not find any thing to bear out this assertion. It is true that they are not numerous, and that hundreds of thousands were swept away by the cruelties formerly practised by their imperious masters; but the case has of late years been different. They live unmolested in their villages, are the gardeners of the country, supply the towns with vegetables and fruits, which do not require much cultivation, and are now likely to increase in numbers. They are usually very quiet, and live most frugally.

The different languages of the various tribes of Indians (of which some account is given by Humboldt) are confined to their own people, and not used by the other races of the inhabitants of the Republic. Very few of the Indians speak or understand more Spanish than is necessary for their trading transactions.

During the eventful scenes of a protracted revolutionary war, law and justice gave place to the dictates of the various leaders of the prevailing parties; and almost all trace of that distributive justice which was strictly attended to by the Spaniards, had disappeared when Mexico found itself free. The early congresses of the Republicans speedily discovered the tottering situation in which the nation still remained, and edicts were passed that the different States, now "free and sovereign" (*libre y soberano*), should form their own laws, for domestic safety, and to repress the wild disorganized manners which now prevailed. Each Senate therefore drew up a code of law, rather, in most instances, according

to the feelings of the framers, than adapted to the temper and character of the people of the State which they directed. In many, the penal code was so arranged that the graver crimes received the lightest punishments; in others,—Jalisco, for instance,—it was said to be founded on the penal code of England, and in this State trial by jury was instituted. Little advantage, however, was derived from this measure, as bribery to some members of this body, and the ignorance of the others, usually swayed their decisions, and justice was rarely dispensed.

The State of Mexico now stands pre-eminent as an example to the others: but none of those which I visited, with the exception of Vera Cruz, have as yet in any way imitated her. In the capital, crime of all description was three years since tacitly sanctioned by the apathy of the government; but many recent executions of murderers, and a strict police, have effected the most beneficial changes; and all classes of people are now protected; while the manners, feelings and ideas

of men living under a just restraint, have most materially improved.

The turbulence of the late troubled times is wearing away, and the State of Vera Cruz may be said to be almost equal to that of Mexico. In Valladolid the people are also orderly and well-behaved. In the more distant States, however, the progress of civilization has been slower; and although Guadalajara, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi, and Las Tamaulipas, have materially changed their general character, very much yet remains to be done; since, as long as murder and daring robberies incur the same trifling punishments as minor offences, the lower classes must long remain in the same state of barbarism.

One court of justice is however equally well supported throughout the whole civilized part of the Republic—that for the decision of questions relating to the mines. Under the government of the Spaniards there was a distinct Tribunal de Minería, of which the supreme court was in the capital; but a branch was establish-

ed in the chief city of each mining State. The laws on this subject were well framed and well administered. The functions of this tribunal have now devolved upon the Governors of States, assisted by a council of the most experienced miners; and the ordinances themselves remain in full effect: so that the foreigners who are now working the Mexican mines can at all times appeal to the "laws of the Minería," should their proceedings be in any way checked by the interference of their mining neighbours. Contested rights, "Desagues*," and the right of water or surface, are the points on which the disputes are usually hinged; and by the dictum of the tribunal the parties must abide.

The usual food of the labouring classes, throughout such States as I visited, is the thin cake of crushed maize, which I have described under the name of Tortilla: and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the great abundance of cattle in many places, the traveller can rarely obtain meat in the little huts which he finds on his road. Chilis are

* Drainage.

eaten abundantly with the Tortillas, being stewed into a kind of sauce, into which the cakes are dipped. A few fowls are at times to be seen wandering near the cottages, or some pigs rambling through the village, and the flesh of these creatures furnishes a feast on holidays.

The infirm and aged country-people lead a quiet easy life, and occupy themselves in the midst of their families, by assisting in cooking their frugal meals, or spinning the woollen or cotton yarn for the manufacture of their very simple dresses. No instruction is given to the rising generation beyond that of rearing the boys to the pursuits of their fathers, and teaching the girls their domestic duties. The priests are usually too ignorant or too indolent to give any kind of education to their young parishioners; and a child which can repeat the *ordinanzas* of the Church, and quantities of orisons to the most popular saint, by rote like a parrot, is considered as being highly gifted. The husbandmen would willingly and gratefully receive advances for the instruction of themselves and fa-

milies ; but in the thinly-peopled districts I know not how sufficient children could be collected to form a school. The infants are usually quiet, docile and intelligent, and, as far as I could observe, of excellent tempers.

There is a marked difference in regard to moral conduct between the dwellers in cities and the agricultural or pastoral people,—very much in favour of the latter. The poor industrious peasant, living amongst his mighty mountains, or tending the immense herds of cattle on the plains, possesses many excellent qualities, and is degraded by but few vices ; while the white Creole of Mexico is the least estimable, in every respect, of the inhabitants of New Spain. The marriages amongst all classes, but particularly those of the poorer orders, are contracted at an early age ; yet I rarely saw such large families of children as are to be met with in Europe. The duration of life is about the same as with us ; and although at a much earlier period the persons of both sexes bear deep impressions of age, they are generally healthy, and

enjoy life free from many of those complaints to which Europeans are subjected in their declining years. Rheumatism is the chief scourge of the old, agues of the middle-aged ; but on the whole, the labouring classes of Mexico may be considered as a very healthy race.

I met with but few cases of insanity amongst any classes of people, but saw several instances of idiocy. The latter sufferers are permitted to ramble about, and are usually treated with great kindness, rarely being turned out of the houses which they enter*, and being regarded rather as objects of pity than derision.

I have so frequently spoken of the dwellings of the Mexicans in the course of my Journal, that I need not describe them further in this slight summary. An account of their dresses also may be collected from the same source.

The country-people weave in rude looms the stuffs in which they clothe themselves; and manufactories are not common in the populous towns

* I am speaking of villages.

and cities. At Puebla, however, there is an extensive manufacture of leather, and Queretaro may also be called a manufacturing town. All classes are rather dirty and slovenly than otherwise, although a love of glittering and fine clothing is inherent in them. Few ablutions are performed by the generality of people. In the cities great improvements are observable within the two or three last years; combs, razors, and *tooth-brushes* being much more in vogue than formerly; yet in the present day the Mexican gentleman rarely, if ever, shaves while travelling, and the ladies relinquish but slowly their favourite cigars.

The Mexican Spaniard is lively and fond of amusement. Religious festivals and fire-works are his delight; and the dances, although very ungraceful compared with those of the mother-country, are always well attended. The love of this amusement is more general amongst the peasantry, who frequently dance throughout the night, with a regard to order and decency which is very praiseworthy. Their musical instruments are small gui-

tars, fiddles, and harps, of their own making; and singing usually accompanies the favourite fandango tunes of the Xarabe. The amusements of the children are as amongst us: but as they grow up, the love of play is instilled into them by the example of their parents, and soon forms one of the most important and favourite occupations of their lives: in fact, gaming, smoking cigars, and riding on horseback in the *Paséo*, are the chief occupations of the men.

Of those States through which I travelled, Guadalajara and Valladolid, with the western boundaries of the State of Mexico, are by far the most productive; and agriculture, even in its present improveable state, yields a certain and valuable revenue. Maize flourishes in all the varieties of the Mexican temperature; wheat and barley are cultivated on the extensive plains amidst the irregular Cordillera, and thrive most luxuriantly at elevations of from 6000 to 7000 feet. The fields are rarely inclosed in any way; and the cattle of the passing traveller not unfrequently make sad incursions amongst the young crops, if not carefully driven, as

they pass along the roads between the rising grain. The maize is cultivated in two ways. The first and most general, called "Taparado," is by sowing in ploughed fields, which are again turned over: the other, named "Tapapié," is when it is planted at regular intervals, a square vara apart, and pressed down by the foot of the husbandman*. I have seen far less standing wheat than barley, which latter occupies very extensive districts near the plains of Appan and in various other parts. The annual rains are in these places sufficient for its nourishment: but there are situations in which all the farinaceous grains require occasional irrigation; for which purpose a mountain-stream or a river is usually considered as indispensable †.

* In this method it is customary, on the crop acquiring a height of three or four feet, to turn up the earth between the lines by means of a light plough; and the hoe is rarely used except in the early stages of the young plants, which six or seven months suffice to bring to maturity. The sowing time is usually in May, June, or July.

† Grain reared by this process is distinguished by the affixture of the term *Riego*: as *Mais de Riego*; *Cebada de Riego*.

No manure of any kind is used for agricultural purposes, although it could in many instances be most effectually employed: yet such is the bounty of Nature, that the almost totally neglected crops are in many instances productive to a degree unknown in Europe.

I am unable to give any comparative proportion between our statute acre and the divisions of land in Mexico, which are purchased or hired by the number of Fanegas of grain they can receive in seed*. The nearest estimate, by an intelligent gentleman near Guadalaxara, is, that 30,000 square varas, or Spanish yards, will receive one Fanega of maize, which is sowed at about three grains to each corner of a square vara. The time of the harvest varies according to localities; but I saw barley in the sheaf near Appan, in October and November.

Near the little villages, peas, beans, (principally of the kind called Frijoli, similar to our black French beans,) varieties of Chilis or Capsicums

* The Fanega is a measure of capacity, and equal to 1.599 English bushels, or five fanegas equal to eight bushels.

and the Camotes or sweet potatoe, are cultivated ; but coffee, cotton, indigo, Vanilla, (which at Vera Cruz was selling at 1000 pods for 150 dollars) and other valuable productions, are chiefly reared in Oaxaca and distant districts which I did not visit. The sugar-cane, fruits, and other products of the warmer climates, are to be found in the depths of the precipitous Barrancas. But I must confess that I saw but little profusion of cultivated flowers ; and still less of fruits, of which so much is said, except in the principal towns or proceeding on their way to them,—fruit or vegetables being rarely procured in any of the villages.

In the States of Tamaulipas and San Luis I have before observed that cultivation is comparatively but little attended to, the plains being almost totally devoted to the pasturage of cattle.

The same may also be said of the State of Zacatecas, the barren wild districts of which are very remarkable, although it also contains many superb Haciendas. These in most instances, unless favoured by the vicinity of some stream, have a

dam (or Presa) of masonry thrown across the narrow part of some narrow dell or valley, in which a large tank of water is preserved from the rains for the irrigation of the farm in the dry season. Canals run from the Presa; and the supply passes through water-gates, which are constructed with considerable ingenuity.

All the agricultural implements are extremely rude, but the natives prefer them in most instances to those recently sent from England. At the farm of Ystula, the property of the Real del Monte Company and situated near the mines, our ploughs are much admired; and the facility of turning up the ground to a depth the Mexican plough cannot reach, the neatness of the distribution of the crops, and the very evident improvement in the produce of many fields, has already excited the astonishment and elicited the praises of the neighbouring farmers, wedded as they have been to their own particular customs. If they once begin to imitate, much will have been accomplished.

The Haciendas usually contain a little village,


inhabited by the labourers on the estate. The women are employed in making curd-cheeses, either for the benefit of the farm or their private consumption; but butter is rarely to be found, hogs'-lard being in most instances used in its place*. The milk indeed of the cows is not of that rich quality which would be requisite for this purpose; and the heat of the climate in many of the most flourishing cattle districts is too great to admit of butter becoming solid, except during the three or four winter months.

The mode of regulating rent is by the number of Fanegas which the land could receive. It is usually paid in money, not in produce.

The price of labour varies very considerably,

* The supply of this most important article of consumption is kept up by some Haciendas being almost exclusively devoted to the breeding and care of hogs, which are usually fed to a certain size in the open country, and then fattened on maize. The lard is also in great demand for the manufacture of soap, and extensive premises are usually fitted up on the farm with all the apparatus requisite for its manufacture.

according to the situation of Haciendas. On the cattle-farms the Vaqueros, Rancheros, or herdsmen, receive about five dollars a month. The husbandman, hired by the day or week, about seven-pence English *per diem*.





APPENDIX.

APPENDIX I.

Notes on the Bar of Tampico, and the River Panuco.

I ENTERED the Gulf of Mexico in the month of March, when the Nortes * are supposed to have nearly ceased, or at all events to have so far diminished in violence as to be no longer objects of dread to any class of vessels. In our passage across from Cape San Antonio we experienced extremely fine weather; and having good observations, were enabled to ascertain the existence of the northerly current, which set us about ten miles a day.

We first struck soundings on approaching the Mexican coast in the parallel of Tampico, in 108 fathoms soft mud, when about thirty miles distant from the shore. At a distance of sixteen or eighteen miles we distinctly made out the land from the deck, although it was represented as being so low that vessels were close

* Violent gales of wind from the North, which are prevalent from November till March.

to the beach before it could be discovered. At this distance we had thirty fathoms water, still muddy bottom. Standing-in for the coast, the soundings diminished regularly, and at about eight miles distance we clearly distinguished the huts at La Barra, which, on a line of coast so completely unpeopled in every other part, are a sufficient mark for vessels making the port; and the captain who has once seen this part of the coast will always recognize it again without any difficulty. At five miles from the land we had ten fathoms, and running into six fathoms, at about two miles made the signal for a pilot, who soon came off in a launch*.

At this distance a continued surf appears to cross the mouth of the River Panuco, in consequence of the Northern point of the Bar overlying that to the Southward; but as the vessel stands-in, a clear passage is seen of about a cable's length across, although varying occasionally from the shifting of the sands of the Bar. The surf on either side is the guide to the pilots; and the depth of water being known, with a proper allowance for the almost continual ground swell, any captain might safely carry his vessel over without assistance; although by doing so he saves no pilotage, since this

* Since our arrival an opposition piloting firm have established themselves at the Bar; and vessels now find the launches on the look-out for them several miles from the land.

must always be paid. The best anchoring ground in the offing is E. by N. of the Bar, in ten fathoms water, although many vessels come into seven and eight; where, it must be observed, they are exposed to a heavier swell, and there would be more difficulty in hauling off the land in the event of bad weather setting in. From all I could learn, a vessel may trust to finding very regular soundings all along this part of the coast; and if, on approaching it, the lead is kept going in the night, no danger need be apprehended in standing-in for the land.

When I first crossed the Bar, our shoalest cast was nineteen feet and a half, the wind easterly. On my second passage over it, at the expiration of about ten days, there were only thirteen feet: and in the three last visits which I paid, I found but twelve. These observations were made as near the time of high water as a constantly varying flood from the river would enable me to judge, since the tides are here very inconsiderable at all times, their average rise and fall seldom exceeding two or three feet. At the time of the Periodical rains, however, the River Panuco becomes enormously swollen, and no estimate can be given of its ever-varying depth at the Bar. The whole distance between the *visible* points at the entrance is about half a mile; but the deepest channel at the time of my passing was scarcely a

cable's length across, and the actual bar little more than a cable's length over. On either side of it, as well to seaward as within the river, the water gradually deepens, although you sooner get into four fathoms water after crossing it than when standing out to sea; for in that direction the flat extends further, and at about one mile distance you have five fathoms. The marks for entering the river at the time of which I speak,—and it must always be remembered that the bar continually shifts,—were these. There are two high rude scaffoldings from which a look-out is kept to seaward; and these are called Miras. The first or outer Mira on with the larboard end of a long barn-like building, brings you into the fair way in four fathoms: you then run until the Mira is its own breadth *from* the barn, and at this moment have the shoalest water; at which time the second or inner Mira is the barn's breadth on the right of the barn. As these bearings shift, the Bar is passed. You may then hug either shore in four to three fathoms, as the wind may be blowing, to give sufficient room to round to and anchor abreast the centre of the little village of huts at La Barra. Before the establishment of an opposition pilot company, captains of vessels were liable to be much imposed upon: but perhaps it will now scarcely be requisite to give them a caution not to place too much confidence in the assertions of the pilots as

to the depth of water ; as they formerly had, and perhaps on some occasions may still have, an interest in representing it as less than it really is. This is in order that the vessel may be anchored outside, and employment given to the launches in discharging sufficient of her cargo, at an enormous expense, to lighten her for crossing the Bar. A boat might always be sent to sound ; and an officer of prudence need fear no accident in doing so in moderate weather, for in the event of the Bar being too rough for him, he could always retreat before he had advanced too far into the short and sometimes dangerously chopping sea which falls on it. Always bearing in mind, that *all the accidents which have happened to boats on the Bar of Tampico, have been while in the act of winding*, when the river current was setting out, and the sea breeze blowing in. The best time for crossing is early in the morning, when even canoes need fear nothing. The evening is sometimes as good also ; but two hours on either side of noon are reported by some pilots as being the worst times. In calm weather vessels may warp in or out in perfect safety with good care and their own boats ; but employing the pilot launches is very expensive, although the pilots are obliged, for their fees, to supply *one* launch free of any other expense. The visiting officer of the Customs comes on board at La Barra, and seals

down all the hatches and store-rooms, which are not opened again until the vessel is again visited on her anchoring off El Pueblo Nuevo de las Tamaulipas. It is therefore requisite that sufficient provisions and other necessities for the ship's use should be taken out of the hold before crossing the Bar; and as the winds cannot always be depended on to carry the vessel up the river, at least a week's supply should be kept out. Some soldiers will also be put on-board, and they remain until the whole cargo is landed. It is not expected that these men should be provisioned; but it is always found politic to do so, as in that case they make themselves useful on-board. Nothing can be done by using rough language or in any way resisting the Custom-house officers at the Bar: some refreshments and attentions will do ten times better.

As soon as the vessel is secured, the captain must find his way to report himself to the commandant of Pueblo Viejo, or Old Tampico; and on application a soldier will accompany him as a guide. It will be requisite that he take with him a manifest of his cargo, and a list of his crew and passengers; but he need not *volunteer* to show his register or name the extent of his tonnage. As at this period (March 1826) an enormous duty is laid on all sealed letters, and four dollars on every newspaper introduced into the country, the Custom-house people

endeavour, as soon as they come on-board at the Bar, to ascertain if any such are on board. Captains should therefore be on their guard against the *civil* offers of these people, to be of assistance by carrying letters on shore, or in their inquiries for recent newspapers: for, once getting these in their possession, they do not give them up until the dues are paid. A gentleman not long before our arrival was thus obliged to pay seventy dollars for a bundle of newspapers, although I believe that there is no government order to impose thus on strangers.

The course of the river from La Barra to the turn of the first reach is S.W. by S. three miles; and vessels will carry good soundings all the way in four, five, and six fathoms, always giving the preference to the larboard shore. The course on rounding the point, off which you may keep about one cable's length, is then rather over by the larboard hand, to avoid a point which is seen to run from Tamaulipas, and which carries a steep shoal a considerable way out with it. Keeping some huts, which will be seen, at about one mile and a half to the S. by W., you are then in the fair way; and rather hugging the side on which they stand, you may then steer for the anchorage abreast of Tamaulipas, to which the vessels at anchor there will be a sufficient direction. Nothing need be apprehended from vessels grounding on either side of the river, as the

rise and fall is inconsiderable, and the bottom a soft mud.

The Custom-house at Tamaulipas closes at one P.M., and nothing can be done after that hour. The chief authorities live at Pueblo Viejo, which is three miles from Tamaulipas, and the way to it is by the huts at the Humo. One mile and a half S. E. by E. of the new town boats must land, or at all events go sufficiently near to the Humo to be examined by a Custom-house officer who is stationed there. The way thence is by a river 200 yards wide, and very shoal where it is broken by small islands. Strangers, who of course do not know the situation of the banks, must push for the first huts they see, and leaving their boat on the beach walk thence into the town. It should be understood by captains, that the towns of Pueblo Viejo and Tamaulipas are in different districts, and that in consequence a ship is not permitted to divide her cargo, but all must be landed at one place. For this, the new town affords by far the greatest facilities, and "permits" may thence be obtained for the opposite side. An enormous expense is attendant on landing a cargo by the boats of the country; and it is therefore advisable that vessels should bring a large long-boat with them for this purpose, as when her work is done she would always sell for double her original cost.

I may exemplify this by saying, that the Real del Monte Company's brig having crossed the Bar, was a saving of about 2000 dollars for launch hire; and having used her own new long-boat in discharging, was a further saving of 500 more. Labour is here very expensive.

The pilotage in and out is thirteen dollars and a half, which are not demanded until the vessel is about to sail, when the consignee settles with the pilots. For the above sum you are entitled, as I have already said, to one launch to assist you. There are three grades of launches, at thirty, thirty-five, and forty dollars; some one of which the pilots will generally endeavour to persuade captains to hire, as essentially requisite. Should it be impossible for a vessel to cross the Bar, she may anchor outside with the most perfect safety; for by taking proper precautions she will always have time to slip at the setting-in of a Norther, which will carry her directly off shore, and when it ceases she may regain her anchor.—A vessel consigned to G. Robertson, Esq., the American Consul, to whom I am indebted for much valuable information, was in this way blown from the shore twenty-two times in two months, before she could finally discharge her cargo.

The town of Pueblo Viejo is most incommodiously situated, as the passage to it is so shallow that laden boats cannot at all times reach it. In mercantile im-

portance it is ceding very fast to the new town, which already contains a large and rapidly increasing population, several good houses and excellent stores, the rent of which, however, is exorbitant.

Altamira, once the principal mercantile dépôt, is now nearly forsaken, and has only a few of the poorer sort of huts inhabited, the chief part of its population having removed to Pueblo Nuevo. From this place a road for wheel-carriages has recently been made to the Bar and Altamira, which will facilitate commerce very materially.

In these remarks which I have drawn up for the assistance of traders to Tampico, it must always be remembered, that in all things concerning the Custom-house, I only write of March until May of 1826; for the regulations are so frequently and unaccountably altered, that perhaps not one of those of 1826 will be legal in 1827.

The navigation of the River Panuco, although practised for a vast number of years, has yet been but little known to captains of ships, neither have commercial men ever turned their attention to it. Those who have ascended, have never given any description of the river, and those living on its banks feel but little interest in exploring beyond their immediate neighbourhood. There are few rivers which meander more in their course than

those of Panuco and San Juan, (the name applied to the Panuco above Tampico,) and in an extent of 206 miles, which I traversed between Pueblo Nuevo and the Rancho of San Juan, there are no less than 216 reaches, of each of which I ascertained the bearings by compass. Three miles above Tamaulipas there are three entrances to the lake of Altamira navigable only for canoes, which prior to the building of Tamaulipas were constantly employed in transporting merchandise to Altamira, as the principal commercial town and dépôt. One of the entrances leads to a small river the Tamisi, whence the towns are supplied with fresh water by canoes which constantly trade in it. The river of Panuco is here about half a mile in width. On either side are scattered, at distant intervals, the huts of Rancheros, who are employed on the large cattle-farms which are established wherever the woods are sufficiently open to admit of the animals pasturing. The immediate banks of the river, however, are thickly clothed with timber, which at and above Panuco is frequently of great size:—the moral or fus-tic wood, ebony, log-wood, palo azul or blue dye-wood, the cedar, sarsaparilla, uli or India-rubber tree, and a vast number of other trees, of which as yet the names and qualities are not known to us; but which may prove to be similar to some of the valuable woods produced in other parts of America. The forests also abound in

wild limes and lemons, with a variety of other fruits, which can be easily procured. At the distance of eighty miles by water, and at about forty by land, stands the town of Panuco. This was once a place of very considerable trade, as a door to the interior; but the new town of Tamaulipas has robbed it of a great part of its commerce. Vessels, however, which can cross the Bar of Tampico *laden*, may always go up; although a week sometimes elapses before they can reach the town, owing to the number of opposite reaches and the very baffling winds. Outward-bound vessels very frequently go up the river for the fustic wood, which is supplied ready cut and barked at half a dollar the quintal. A trade is also kept up between this place and Campeachy in salt, for which there is a great demand at the Ranchos in order to the curing of the *tasaja* or hung beef.

Panuco is an old and well known Indian town of the Guastecos. The land on either side of the river at this part is highly cultivated in maize, gourds, and melons; but it is annually inundated by the rise of the waters, which at times flood the streets of Panuco, although at the time I visited it the town appeared to stand on a bank at least thirty feet above the level of the river. Five miles above Panuco a stop is put to a further navigation of the river by vessels of burthen; as a bar, having at this season but four feet water on it, runs im-

mediately across from shore to shore. This bank is about a quarter of a mile over, after which the river again acquires in certain parts a depth of two or three fathoms. At a distance of forty-seven miles by water above Panuco is the small Indian village of Tanjuco, in which there is not a single white resident. By land the distance between these two places is but nine leagues, about twenty-seven English miles. At fifteen miles above Tanjuco is the junction of the rivers San Juan and Tamoin with that hitherto called the Panuco. The Tamoin is said to come from the westward, and is I believe supplied by the river Limon, and several smaller streams which are crossed on the journey from Tampico to San Luis. I know not how far the Tamoin may be navigable; but its tributaries are certainly not so, even for canoes, on account of the falls and shallows. At about three days or fifty miles from the junction of the Tamoin with the Panuco are warm sulphureous baths, to which the sick resort from the coast in great numbers. I followed the San Juan to the S.W. through abundance of turnings. At thirty-six miles above the junction, the small clear river Tempoal enters the San Juan from the eastward; and on passing this we soon after came to rapids and shoals, which much impede laden canoes in their ascent, as they run considerable risk from the rush of water over the stony banks,

on which lie grounded large trunks of trees, forming very dangerous eddies. At this height up the river the difficulties are too numerous for people to trust merchandise in canoes: and the highest point to which laden boats might be sent is Tanquichi, eighty-seven miles above Panuco. The roads here are very good, and are said to continue so in its neighbourhood, to various parts of the country. There is however so little commerce to this place at present, that cargo-mules seldom arrive there, although there is little doubt but that they might be procured by a previous order, should this line of route at any time be adopted. In my opinion nothing would be saved, either in expense or time, by sending goods up the river in boats, as they would be many days in reaching the point of which I speak, and the usual pace of cargo-mules from Tampico would perhaps outstrip them. The labour of canoe-men, and hire of their boats, is very dear; and after all, the Arrieros would without doubt charge high for bringing their mules out of the usual route. Thus in my opinion the river can never be of the slightest use to us, until towns, roads, and establishments are placed at the highest navigable points, which is not likely to be the case for very many years. To ascend again from Tanquichi to the Rancho of San Juan, (which is the extreme point I visited, and 206 miles from Tamaulipas,) canoes should

only be half-laden at this season, as the rapids above Tanquichi are very frequent and impetuous ; but heavier boats or rafts might descend the river with far less difficulty.

San Juan and Tanquichi are twenty-four miles apart by water, and from the former place it has never been the custom to forward goods : I could therefore gain no information as to the probable time of their transport to San Luis. The few people who had travelled on that road varied much in their accounts ; but I should fix the time for a cargo at sixteen days. San Juan is a small beautifully situated Rancho, containing about a hundred inhabitants. The river above this passes to Miraflores, about eighty miles higher, where there is an American establishment, with saw-mills for cutting cedar. Hence the river comes from Tamasinchali, where it assumes the name of Moctezuma, and its source is from the lakes, by the “desague” of Huehuetoca near the capital of Mexico.

Of the Bar of Tampico.

The greater part of the eastern coast, in the centre of the Gulf of Mexico, trends nearly N.N.W. and S.S.E. for many hundred miles ; and a continual surf, varying in its strength according to circumstances, breaks along the shore for the whole of that extent. This is known to increase tremendously in violence during the preva-

lence of the Nortes, or northerly gales, which blow with great frequency and impetuosity from the months of November until March.

As the direction of these furious winds is immediately along the coast, they necessarily bring with them an additional set of current near the shore, although it has, I believe, been ascertained by vessels well in the offing, that there is a strong set of *northerly* current during the gales. The in-shore stream passing to the south, necessarily offers an opposition to any cross sets, as from the rivers of Sotto La Marina, La Barra Ciega, Tampico and Alvarado, which places all have Bars of a variety of depths, and said to shift according to the prevalence of the Northers during their appointed season. The impediments which the outsets of these rivers present to the passage of the southern current must, it is evident, offer sufficient check to cause the deposit of the sands it carries with it, of course, on that side where it first receives the opposition.

That the Bar of Tampico owes its origin to circumstances of this nature is very fully proved by the constant shifting of its sands, and the situation of the low shoal points which form the entrance of the river. That to the northward bears evident marks of being more under the influence of the prevailing current than the other, from its superior elevation, and above all from

the immense quantity of drift wood which lies closely blended with the sands and broken shells of which it is composed, while the southern shoal, at the season of which I speak, had not a single stick upon it.

The encroachment of the northern point upon the sea is also very remarkable, and is proved by the half visible wreck of a schooner, which was lost on it nearly two years since, and which is now above two hundred yards from the line of surf. Masses of madreporite, corals and pumice-stones are also found in great quantities here, while on the south side they are very rare. I mention these facts as showing the great facilities which offer themselves for constructing a durable bulwark for the entrance of this small but increasingly important mercantile harbour; since it appears to me from repeated observations, that with the simple assistance of stakes and wattles, well placed and driven into the sand in the calm months, the first Norther in the blowing season would have the effect of raising a bank against them; and fresh piles might be thus added and continued to seaward, until a firm point should be formed, where now is a long shoal of a mile in extent, on which the sea constantly breaks, and which off its outer end in the blue water, has but two fathoms water. I do not mean to affirm that any additional depth would be secured to the centre of the Bar by these means; but I conceive

that a more equal and secure channel might be thus obtained, and its variations from nineteen to eight feet avoided, leaving perhaps an intermediate depth sufficient to permit the constant entrance of vessels drawing twelve feet water, or perhaps more. The current of the Panuco is not so strong as to stop the influx of the tides, although it offers a considerable check to them; and as its course on passing the bar rather inclines to the south-eastward, a natural current might in all probability be formed, if the river were unimpeded in its outset by the heavy seas which roll along the coast. The latitude of the north point of the Bar is $22^{\circ} 16' N.$, and its longitude, from repeated observations by chronometer, confirmed by comparison with the observations on board H.M.S. Tweed, is $97^{\circ} 43' W.$

APPENDIX II.

Notes on the Process of Amalgamation at the Hacienda of La Saucedá, Veta Grande, Zacatecas.

THE ore after being raised from the mine and broken on the *Patio*, or Dressing-floor, at the Veta Grande, is weighed and put into leather bags. These are carried by asses, each of which is laden with a carga of twelve arobas, or 300lbs., to the Hacienda, under the charge of a careful confidential person and several drivers, whose exclusive duty it is to attend to the safe-conduct of the metal. The cargas are all delivered into the Hacienda, with a list of their number and qualities: and the first process to which the ores are subjected, is that of the

Molinos, or Stamps.

These in principle very much resemble the stamps used in the tin mines in Cornwall, although inferior to them in power, neither falling with such weight nor crushing the ore so completely. They are worked by mules; and the ore is constantly supplied by three lads, who take it from the heap between two pieces of hollow board or horn, and throw it beneath the stamps. As the ore is crushed it falls through small holes of the

size of peas, which are perforated in strong hides stretched on a slope on either side the machine, placed immediately over a pit which receives the *Granza*, or fine ore, and is entered by a small flight of steps.

There are seven Molinos at the Hacienda, six of which work constantly ; the seventh being kept ready against any sudden emergency. To attend to these, each Molino has three *Cebadores*, or feeders of metal, at four reals and a half *per diem*; and one *Arreador*, or mule-driver, at four reals *per diem*. He sits on the extreme end of the lever, and drives the animals, much as they are driven in the Cornish whims. They are, however, blindfolded. Each Molino has eighteen mules, of which three at a time are used and driven abreast at a trot, and these are changed every three hours. The Molinos work from 4 A.M. until 8 P.M., and each crushes on an average six *Montons** of twenty quintals *per diem*. A Molino has nine *Mazos*, or stamps, of which the *Almadanctas*, or iron heads, each weigh one quintal. The length of the staff of each stamp is about nine feet four inches, and its size seven inches by four.

The heads descend on two long blocks of iron, (or copper when iron cannot easily be procured,) called

* The Monton varies in quantity in different parts of the country. At Real del Monte it is of thirty quintals; at Zacatecas, as above stated, twenty quintals.

Chapas. These and the heads generally last from ten to twelve months. The cost of the wood work of a Molino is about 500doll.

The iron for 9 heads 9 quintals

2 chapas 9

18 at 30 doll. the quint.= 540

Making a total cost of 1040doll.

The men who work at the Molinos never leave the walls of the Hacienda on any account, except on feast days, or Saturdays at night, and they return again to their work at 4 o'clock on the Monday morning. They are all very strictly searched before passing the outer doors.

From the Molinos, the dry Granza, or pounded ore, is carried to the

Tahonas, or Grinding Mills.

Of these there are seventy-four, which work during the same hours as the Molinos or Stamps, to which they are immediately adjacent; that is to say, from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M.: and the men who attend them are subject to the same confinement in the Hacienda, but return to it and commence working on the Sunday evening at 6 P.M. The *Tasas*, or Bowls of the *Tahonas*, are about nine feet in diameter by one foot in depth, and are smoothly paved with flat unhewn slabs of porphyry. The bowl

is also surrounded by a low rough rim of the same material. The machinery of the Tahona is extremely simple, and merely a strong shaft moving on a spindle in a beam above it. It rests on a firm iron pivot beneath, which traverses in a small iron socket on the top of a post of hard wood, rising about a foot above the ground in the centre of the Tasa. This prop and the shaft are about six feet ten inches in total height between the beam and the base, and the shaft is crossed at right angles by two strong spars, which form four stout arms, each about five feet long. To the end of each of these is attached a large block of red porphyry, by lashings which are tied to two wooden pegs firmly driven into the upper side and extremity of the blocks, and then strongly secured at the same distances to the bar, so as to give a free scope to the stone, which is thus drawn evenly over the base by the action of the machine. The Granza, or dry crushed ore, is then mixed with a proper quantity of water, and the grinding is commenced. The four grinding stones are called *Metapiles*. Their average length is about two feet eight inches, and about eighteen inches square. They weigh about thirty arobas, and are delivered at the Hacienda at two dollars each. Notwithstanding the hardness and great size of these blocks, they become unserviceable from loss of weight in ten or twelve weeks; and the paving

of the *Tasas* is of about the same duration. Each *Tahona* has four mules attached to it, of which two work at a time harnessed to one of the horizontal arms lengthened to nine feet, so that each *Parada*, or relief, shall work eight hours; as thus:—from 4 to 6 : 6 to noon : noon to 6 : 6 to 8. In the course of which sixteen hours every *Tahona* is supposed to grind ten quintals of *Granza* into *Lama*. This last when considered by the *Macero* to be sufficiently reduced, is carried to the *Patio* or amalgamation floor, by the *Tahoneros* (men who attend the *Tahonas*) in a tub slung to a long pole.

Every two *Tahonas* have one man to attend them (a *Tahonero*), at four reals *per diem*.

The whole *Galera*, or shed under which the *Tahonas* work, is under the superintendence of one *Macero*, at from fifteen to twenty dollars a week; two *Ayudante Maceros*, at from eight to ten dollars a week; and a *Capitan de Galera*, at from six to eight dollars a week.

The cost of a *Tahona*, including the paving of the bowl and the four grinding stones, is on an average thirty dollars.

The *Patio*, or Amalgamation Floor.

This is a large flat space open to the sky, 312 feet in length by 236 in breadth, and securely surrounded

by strong walls. It is paved with large unhewn slabs of porphyry, and is capable of containing twenty-four *Tortas* (or flat circular collections of Lama, of about fifty feet diameter and seven inches deep when the Patio is not filled, but of somewhat smaller dimensions when nearly so) ranged in four rows and numbered from the left-hand corner *.

A *Torta* of Zacatecas contains sixty *Montons* of twenty quintals each, and is thus formed. In the first instance a square space of the requisite size for the *Torta* is marked out and inclosed by a number of rough planks, which are propped in their places on the Patio floor by large stones; and dried horse dung and dust is piled round their edges, to prevent the escape of the Lama. A heap of *Saltierra* † is then piled in the centre, in the proportion on an average of two fanegas and a half to the *Monton*, = 150 for the *Torta*. After this, the Lama, in the quantity I have mentioned, is poured in. When the last or sixtieth *Monton* is delivered, the *Saltierra* is shovelled down and well mixed with the Lama by treading it by horses and turning it with shovels, after which

* At one end a small space is generally set apart for the assays, which are made on one *Monton* each; and at the other side are two small tanks, in which the men and horses wash their legs after treading out the *Tortas*.

† For this and other terms made use of see the Glossary at the end.

the preparation is left in quiet for the remainder of the day. This operation is called *Ensalmorar*, and the day of rest *Dia de Descanso*. On the day following comes *El Incorporo*. After about one hour's treading by horses, the *Magistral*, or roasted and pulverized copper ore, is mixed with the Lama (the repaso or treading still continuing), in summer in the proportion of fifteen cargass of twelve arobas to the Torta (if the ore is of six mares per Monton), and in winter in only half the quantity; for it is a singular fact, that in summer the mixture cools and requires more warmth, while in winter it acquires of itself additional heat. With poorer ores,—as for instance those of four mares to the Monton,—twelve cargass are applied in summer, and six in winter. From November to February *Cal* (or lime) is also occasionally used to cool the Lama, in the proportion of about a peck per Monton.

The *Repaso*, or treading out, is continued by six horses, which are guided by one man, who stands in the Lama and directs them by holding all their long halters. This operation is much more effectual in a morning than in the evening, and occupies about five or six hours. When the *Magistral* is well mixed, the *Azogue* (quicksilver) is applied, by being sprinkled through pieces of coarse cloth doubled up like a bag, so that it spurts out in very minute particles. The *Repaso Fuerte* (or a second treading of the horses) then follows; after

which the whole mixture is turned over by six men with wooden shovels, who perform the operation in an hour. The men are called *Repasadores*; and the turning the *Torta*, *Traspallar*. The *Torta* is then smoothed and left at *Descanso* for one entire day, to allow of the incorporation going forward. After every *Repaso* the legs of the men and horses are carefully washed in small tanks at one corner of the *Patio*. These are occasionally cleaned out, to collect any portions of amalgam which may have been deposited. The *Torta* undergoes the turning by shovels and treading by horses every other day, until the *Azoguero* (or amalgamator) ascertains that the *Azogue del incorporo* (or first admixture of quicksilver) is found to have been all taken up by the silver; and this he does by vanning or washing a small quantity of the *Torta* in a little bowl. A new supply is then added, which is called *el Cebo*; and when this is also found to have done its duty, the *Baño* (another addition of quicksilver) is applied, in order to catch any stray particles of silver which may yet remain; and on the same day, after a good *Repaso*, the *Torta* is removed on hand-barrows by the *Cargadores* (or labourers appointed to this service) to the *Tinas* or *Lavaderos*, in order that it may receive its final cleansing.

The general method of proportioning the quicksilver to the *Tortas*, is by allowing that every *Marco* of silver

which is promised by trial of the ores as the probable produce of a *Monton*, will require in the whole process 4lbs. A *Marco* is eight ounces.

In metals of five to six mares and a half the *Monton*, (which was about the average richness of produce at *Zacatecas*,) 16lbs. of quicksilver is incorporated for every *Monton*, = 900lbs. the *Torta*. On the day of *Cebo* the proportion is 5lbs. the *Monton*, = 300lbs. ; and when the *Torta* is ready to receive the *Baño*, it is applied at the rate of 7lbs. the *Monton*, = 420lbs. : making a total of 1620lbs. of quicksilver. With poorer metals,—of four mares for instance,—the quicksilver is applied at the rate of 9lbs. the *Monton* for the *Incorporo*.. = 540lbs.

Cebo 3lbs..... = 180

Baño 4lbs..... = 240

Total 960lbs.

A smaller quantity of *Magistral* is also required in this case ; as for instance, twelve *cargas* in summer and six in the winter. It should also be observed, that it is sometimes found necessary to add a second *Cebo*.

The usual time for the completion of the process of amalgamation is from twelve to fifteen days in the summer, and twenty to twenty-five days in the winter. This, it must be observed, is less than a third of the time occupied at some other mines, and than half the period required in some establishments which are even situated at

the same elevation and nearly under the same temperature. I attribute this circumstance in some degree to the method of amalgamation, but more so to the quantity benificiated at a time in the large Tortas, which being spread out flat, receive the influence of the sun's rays throughout their thickness. In the generality of Mexican mines, only one Monton is mixed at a time; and the Lama is then piled in a small conical heap or Monton.

In summer the days of applying the Azogue are :—

El Incorporo, on the day following the Ensalmorar.

El Cebo, about the ninth day after the Incorporo.

El Baño, about the fifth day after the Cebo.

In winter, el Cebo takes place about the twelfth day after the Incorporo, and the Baño about the ninth day after the Cebo.

Tina or Lavadero, Washing Vat.

There are two of these under cover at this Hacienda; and in them the prepared Tortas are washed, in order that the earthy matters may pass off, and that the *Pella* (or amalgam) may deposit itself at the bottom. In depth these vats are about eight feet, and their diameter nine; they are well and firmly built of masonry, and the washing is thus performed :—A large horizontal wheel worked by mules gives impetus to a vertical one turning a

small horizontal wheel fitted round a perpendicular wooden shaft revolving on an iron pivot at the bottom of the Tina. To the lower extremity of this shaft are fitted four cross beams, from which long wooden teeth rise to the height of five feet; and their motion through the water is very rapid, and sufficient to keep all the lighter particles afloat, while the heavier ones sink beneath their influence. The larger wheel is worked by four mules, two at each extremity of a beam which crosses it. These animals are changed every four hours; and there are three Paradas (or twelve mules) to each Tina. The *Ariadores*, or drivers, receive each six reals *per diem*, and one is attached to each Tina. The washing water is supplied from two large tanks, on a somewhat higher level than the rim of the Tinajas, and which are filled by a *Noria*, or water-engine, turned by two mules. Four belong to this machine, and the Paradas are changed at the same time with those of the *Tahonas*. One man attends them at their work, and receives four reals a day.

It requires twelve hours work of one Tina to wash a *Torta* properly. This operation is performed under the particular superintendence of a *Guarda Tina*, at fifteen dollars a week. Eight *Cargadores* (porters or labourers expressly appointed to the duty) are employed in carrying the prepared *Lama* of the *Torta* in hand-

barrows to the Tinajas, and are paid according to the distance of the Torta which is to be washed. Their wages differ therefore from one real to one and a half a man for each Torta. When the washing is completed, one dollar is given amongst the cargadores for each Tina they are to clear; and nine reals are also paid between them for the re-washing of the earth cleared from the Tina in emptying it of the amalgam. Thus four dollars two reals are distributed on every washing day. The re-washing of the earth is performed under proper inspection in a tank in the Lavaderia, by means of large wooden bowls, which are most dextrously managed by the Cargadores. Old women called *Apuranderas* then carry off the refuse earth, which they wash again; and they are paid at the rate of one real the ounce, or two dollars the pound, for the *Pellita* or *Pella* (amalgam) which they can procure from it. The whole operation of washing is strictly watched by the *Guarda Tinajas*, the *Azoguero*, and the *Dependientes* or clerks of the establishment; and the Cargadores who have been employed in the process are very carefully examined upon leaving the place, to see that they have secreted no *Pella* about their persons.

Notwithstanding the attention which is paid to the washing process, a portion of the amalgam is unavoidably carried off by the stream of water and earthy mat-

ters ; and this deposits itself with part of the Magistral in the channels for the washing water, which are accordingly often cleared out. This deposit called *Marmaja* is brought to be washed again in the tank in the Lavaderia, after which it is delivered over to the Apuranderas, to receive its final cleaning.

The amalgam, which from the application of the third portion of quicksilver called the Baño is in a very liquid state, is carefully carried in bowls into the

Azogueria,

where the process of straining the active or uncombined quicksilver from the amalgam is performed. The name of "Azogue" still continues to be applied to the amalgam until all the uncombined quicksilver is drained from it, which is performed, after it has been carefully weighed, by pouring it into a large long bag suspended by strong hide ropes from a cross-beam over a kind of vat of masonry smoothly plastered within, and capable of containing about two hogsheads. This bag, called *Manga*, has its upper part of strong well sewed leather, and the lower or pointed end of a thick kind of canvass very closely woven. Through this the uncombined quicksilver very speedily finds its way ; and as it filters off, the mass begins to harden in the bag, until at length it acquires sufficient consistency to bear being

formed in moulds ; when it is taken out and weighed again, so as to ascertain the quantity of quicksilver which has drained from it. The amalgam is then beaten down into a wedge-shaped mould. The portion thus moulded is called *Marqueta*, and weighs 30lbs. Three of these wedges are ranged side-by-side on a small stool, and when all are ready they are carried into the

Quemadero, or Burning-House.

In the first place the *Marquetas*, to the number of eleven, are arranged in a close circle on a solid copper stand called *Baso*, having a round hole in the centre. This layer is called a *Cuerpo* ;—others then follow until the number of wedges are all disposed of, and the pile is called *Piña*. The “*Cuerpos*” are squeezed tightly together by a rope being drawn round them ; and such is the tenacity of the amalgam, that it does not break. The *Baso*, previous to the formation of the *Piña*, is placed over a pipe leading to a small tank of water into which the quicksilver trickles during the process ; and from the peculiar formation of the *Marquetas* a continuous hole, of the same size as that in the *Baso*, is left in the centre of the *Piña*, for the free passage of the quicksilver, as it is forced from the amalgam by heat. A large bell-shaped copper cover called *Capellina* is now hoisted up, and carefully lowered over the *Piña* by

means of pulleys ; and a strong luting of ashes, sal-tierra, and lama, is applied to its lower edge, and made to fit very closely to the plate on which stands the Baso. A wall of fire-bricks is then built loosely round the Capellina ; and charcoal in the proportion of three *Capas* (the inclosed space filled thrice) for each Cuerpo being supplied, from time to time it continues burning all night.

During this process the quicksilver trickles down into a Pileta or little tank of water, from whence it is afterwards, when quite cool, collected and weighed, in order that the quantity lost in the burning may be correctly ascertained. On the following morning, (usually Saturday,) after about twenty hours burning, the bricks and ashes are removed, the luting broken, and the Capellina hoisted up. The *Plata Quemada* (burnt silver) is then found in a hard mass, which is broken as nearly as possible into its first shape by the Partidor de Plata, with a wedge and sledge-hammer. It is then again weighed ; and being put into leathern bags, in the quantity of $67\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. or 135 marcs to each, is carried to the

Casa de Fundicion (Casting-House),

where it is made into bars by a very simple process. This place contains a common pair of furnace-bellows, the nozzle of which projects through a wall ; and op-

posite this is placed an iron cage called *El Craz*, which stands over a small machine (*Jantilla*), named I believe, in England, a double-handed ladle, into which the metal falls in melting. A portion of the *Plata Quemada*, viz. the contents of one of the leathern sacks, or 135 marcs, with a quantity of charcoal, is piled in the ladle; and being exposed to the blast from the bellows, in about twenty-three minutes melts down into the receptacle below, whence it is poured into a stone or iron mould called "*Ladrillera*," (well lined with a preparation of fine clay,) in which it is formed into bars in the form of a pig of lead, seventeen inches long, by six wide and two and a half deep, termed *Barra de Plata*. Each of these weighs as nearly as possible, 135 *Marcos*, of 8 ounces, = 1080 ounces. The loss in burning is averaged at about 5 ounces to each *Barra*, and the *total loss of quicksilver* in the whole process, comprehending *Patio*, *Tina*, *Quemadero* and *Fundicion*, is at about the following rates:

With good metals (that is to say above six marcs), it loses two and a half to three per cent. With coarser metals eight to nine per cent:—and the average loss at our Hacienda was from seven to eight per cent.

The bars are sent to the Veta on the Saturday; on the following Monday they are carried to the Mint (*Casa de Moneda*) in Zacatecas; and on the ensuing Friday their amount in dollars is received.

The expenses of the coinage are (for Veta Grande alone, other mines paying twenty reals) as follows :

Twelve reals for each hundred marcs Fundicion and essay.

Three per cent *ad valorem* the silver.

Two reals each marc for coinage.

There is also a further impost of one and a half per cent, under the head of *Direcho di Mineria*.

Magistral (Copper Ore roasted and finely pulverized) is of two kinds ; the *Abronzado* or *Negro*, which is a very rich gray ore ; and the *Cobriso*, of an inferior quality.

The first is purchased at from five to five dollars and a half the carga, of twelve arobas, and delivered at the Hacienda. The latter costs fifteen to twenty reales the carga. It is procured from the copper mines of *Tepisala*, at the *Asientos de Ybarra*, twenty leagues to the southward of *Zacatecas* ; in which district are also some silver mines. At these works the copper is also smelted in great quantities.

The first process through which the ore is put at the Hacienda, is to reduce it by breaking (*granzear*), to a fine powder between two large stones, for which is paid one real and a half for every carga crushed in this very laborious manner. This *Granza* is then ground to a paste in a *Tahona*, after which it is spread out to

dry on the ground ; and having been well beaten, to break any lumps which may have formed, it is mixed with some of the Magistral from the washings of the Marmaja. The best ore, (abronzado,) requires an admixture of one-third of this. The inferior is mixed with one-half. In this state it is put into furnaces, which each takes two cargas. Seven of these are constantly at work, fed by the wood of the Yucca-tree. Each furnace expends two Carreta (cart) loads a week, and these on an average are at three dollars the load.

To attend to the preparation of the Magistral there is a *Quemadero* (or burner), at five dollars a week ; and one *Peon* (labourer) to each furnace, at four reals the day.

Sal Blanca. Saltierra. (White salt. Salt earth.)

The *Sal Blanca* and *Saltierra* are muriate of soda, which is procured as an efflorescence from low salt marshes in various parts of Mexico. That from which this Hacienda is supplied is at a place called *Salinas* (Peñon Blanco of Humboldt), three days journey for carretas, and lying about thirty leagues to the eastward of Veta Grande. It is the property of Government, and yields a great revenue, now that the mines are again in activity. The price of the *Sal Blanca* is from three to three and a half dollars the Fanega (five Fanegas are equal to eight bushels) ; and the *Fleyte* (or carriage,)

three to four reals. The Saltierra, which is so intimately blended with a light clayey earth that its nature can only be ascertained by the taste, is much cheaper, and is on an average procured at seven reals the Fanega : four of which are for the purchase, and three for the conveyance in two-wheeled cars or waggons, drawn by eight bullocks each.

The payment from the Hacienda to the Salinas is not expected before the expiration of one year after the delivery of the salt.

The quantity generally used is two fanegas and a half to the Monton : but in cases where saltierra is not at hand or sufficiently abundant, one fanega of Saltierra and an *Almud* and a half of Sal Blanca may be used for each Monton. An *Almud* is the twelfth part of a fanega.

Experiments on temperature of Tortas, at Saucedo.

Air 68° in the shade : day gloomy at 7 A.M.

A Torta about to be washed ; the whole process having been completed was at 63° .

A Torta eight days beneficio, 63° : several others the same.

A heap of dry Magistral 80° ; a handful wetted 114° .

A heap of dry Marmaja 76° ; a handful wetted 80° .

Saltierra dry 63° ; water in a tank 65° .

A Torta immediately after the admixture of Magistral by Repaso Fuerte, only increased its temperature from 63° to $64^{\circ}5$.

An exact statement of the cost of beneficiating one Monton of metal, supposing its "ley" to be six mares, allowing one pound and a half of quicksilver as its loss for each pound, which is the utmost that should be *expended* in the whole quantity.

For crushing by stamp six cargas eight arobas = 2000lbs. English, at one real and a half per	doll.	real.
carga	1	2
For grinding to paste, including the cost of Tahonas, mules, Tahoneros, and Metapiles (or grinding-stones) each in proportion to its daily expense or waste	1	5
For two fanegas and a half of Saltierra, at seven reals	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
For three arobas of Magistral, at the rate of four dollars the carga.....	1	0
For ten Repasos, at one real each	1	2
For washing a Monton.....	0	3
For burning the silver	0	2
Expenses of the people who work and attend the process	1	0
For 4lb. 8oz. of quicksilver consumed and ex- pended or lost, at the rate of six reals the pound	3	3
Total.....	12	2 $\frac{1}{2}$

As the ores increase in richness the expenditure is greater, in the proportion of eight ounces of quicksilver for every marc of increased value. Thus ores of twenty-six mares to the Monton, would cost seven dollars and a half more ; = 10lbs. of quicksilver.

APPENDIX III.

GLOSSARY.

Abronzado. Yellow copper ore (sulphuret of copper) which is burnt for magistral.

Administrador. The principal superintendant, who has charge and responsibility of the whole establishment, ore, and distribution of money, &c.

Albañil. The bricklayer or mason.

Almadanetas. Iron stamp-heads.

Almud. The twelfth part of a fanega.

Apuradores. Men who re-wash the earth from the tinas.

Apuranderas. Old women who re-wash the ore after it has been washed in the tinas.

Arnero. A slope covered with leather perforated with small holes, over which the crushed ore is made to slide, and allowing the portions which are sufficiently small to run through into the holes below.

Aroba. Twenty-five pounds weight.

Arrayador. } A driver; he who drives the mules in the
Arréador. } malacates or stamps.

Arrieros. Muleteers.

Asogue. Quicksilver. This name is also applied, but

improperly, to metals capable of being amalgamated.

Asoguería. The room set apart for separating the amalgam from the active quicksilver, for weighing the "Pella," and forming it into "Cuerpos."

Atisador. The dresser of magistral.

Ayudante Azoguero. Assistant to the azoguero.

Azoguero. The amalgamator. This is an office of considerable importance, much experience being required in conducting the process.

Banguillos. Stools on which the marquetas are placed.

Baño. The last portion of quicksilver applied to a torta, literally as a bath to overflow the amalgam and collect it all, that none escapes.

Baril. A cask; those used to carry lama are slung to a pole.

Barra. A bar. A term used in the division of profits or property in a mine, which it is the custom to consider as divided into twenty-four bars or shares. Thus a proprietor of the half-share of a mine is said to hold twelve barras of it.

Barra de Plata. A bar of silver is 135 mares, or 1080oz.

Barratero. The working miner.

Batéa apuradera. Bowl used in the re-washings.

Baxo. The lower part; the term is applied to the base on which the phatillo rests.

Bota. Large skin bag in which the water is drawn from the mine.

Brazuelos. Cogs of the master-wheel.

Burráda. A jackass.

Cadena de la Naria. Chain for the buckets of the wheel which draws water from the well.

Cajon de Granza. The name of the pit to receive the crushed ore.

Cajonero. One who receives the manta or bota at the shaft's mouth.

Canal. The water spout for "Tina."

Candellero. A socket deeper than the chumacera, and used for the same purpose. (See *Chumacera*.)

Capellina. A large bell-shaped hood of copper beneath which the amalgam is burnt for the purpose of extracting the quicksilver by distillation.

Capitan de Galera. The person in charge of the sheds under which the tahonas are worked.

Capitan del Patio. Chief ore dresser who has charge of the amalgamation floor, and sees that it is cleaned and in order at the close of each day's work.

Caporal. Chief stable-man.

Carcamo. The drain which carries off the earthy matter from the tinas when washing the amal-

gam. This is frequently cleared out and washed for quicksilver.

Carga. Twelve arobas, = 300lbs.

Cargador. One whose duty consists in carrying the amalgam to the tinas and in cleaning them out.

Carena. An upright stanchion for supporting machinery.

Castillo. The frame of the stamping machine.

Cebo. The second addition of quicksilver to the "Torta."

Chapas. Iron blocks on which the stamps fall.

Chumacéra. An iron socket for the spindles of shafts.
(See *Candelero.*)

Cobriso. An inferior kind of copper ore: sometimes the term is applied to iron pyrites.

Colero. Assistant of the under-ground captain in charge of the péonada or account of daily labour.

Contra Cajonero. He who carries away the stuff sent up the shaft. (See *Cajonero.*)

Corraleros. Stable-men.

Correa. The person in charge of the corral or stables.

Cras. An iron cage or frame into which with a quantity of charcoal the burnt silver is put for its final process of melting; from the cras it falls into the Jantilla;—which see.

Criba. Perforated leather through which the stamped

ore falls when sufficiently fine into a pit beneath.

Cruces. The cross pieces of the grinding mills.

Cubo. A leather or other bucket.

Cuchara de Cuerno. A small horn bowl in which the earth of the tortas is washed, in order to ascertain from time to time the progress of the amalgamation.

Cuerpo. Is the wedge-shaped mass of hard amalgam formed in a mould preparatory to burning. A number of tiers of cuerpos form a piña.

Dependientes. A name applied to the inferior officers and clerks of the establishment.

Descanso, dia de. The day on which the tortas are left at rest.

Destajero. A labourer working by the piece. In mines the term is applied to the working miner employed on tut work.

Dientes. The cogs on a large wheel which receive those of the smaller.

Eje. The axis of a wheel.

Ensalmorar. The act of mixing the saltierra with the lama :—the first process in amalgamation.

Espeque. The cross lever of the noria or tahona, to which the mules are harnessed.

Fanega. A measure of capacity, equal to 1·599 En-

glish bushel. Five fanegas are therefore very nearly equal to eight bushels.

Fuelles. The bellows used in the fundicion, &c.

Fundicion. The process of melting the burned silver into bars.

Galera. A shed.

Granza. The crushed dry ore as it comes from the stamps.

Greta. Litharge.

Gualdra. The large cross beam in which the upper spindles of the shafts of machinery traverse.

Guarda Tinas. He who superintends the washing of the amalgam in the vats or tinas.

Guarda Tiro. A man who takes account of the stuff brought up the shaft where he is stationed.

Guijo. The iron spindle of the shaft of machinery.

Hornos de Magistral. Roasting stoves for copper ore.

Incorporo. The first mixing of the quicksilver with the lama.

Jantilla. A double handed ladle into which the melted silver falls from the cras.

Ladrillera. An iron or stone mould in which the melted silver is poured in order to form the barra.

Lama. Ore ground into a fine paste by the tahonas.

Lamero. The lama when merely thickened by admixture with saltierra.

Lavaderos. Amalgam-washers.

Lentermillas. Large vertical wheels of the stamping apparatus.

Macero. He who has the charge and direction of crushing and grinding the ore in the tahonas previous to amalgamation.

Magistral. An ore of sulphuret of copper mixed with iron, which is roasted and pulverized, and mixed with the lama to decompose the ores of silver in the process of amalgamation.

Magistraleros. Men who burn the copper ore.

Mandadero. Daily messenger.

Manta. The leather bag in which the ore is sent up the shaft.

Mantero. One who carries away rubbish and clearings in the levels below.

Marmaja. The deposit, chiefly of metallic matters collected from the washings of the torta in separating the amalgam. It is burnt, and the copper and iron pyrites are again used in certain proportions with fresh magistral.

Masos. Stamping staves, to which the almadanetas are fixed.

Mayordomo. Chief of the arrieros.

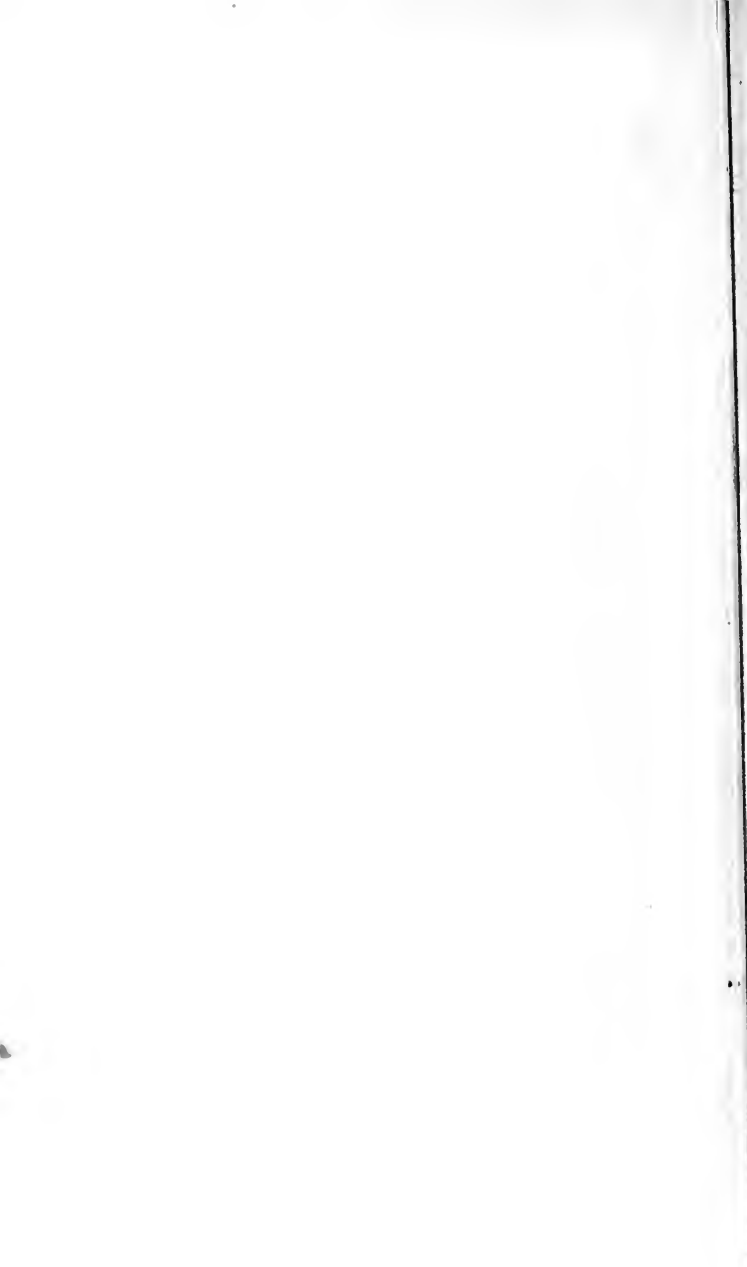
Metapiles. Grindstones used in the tahonas.

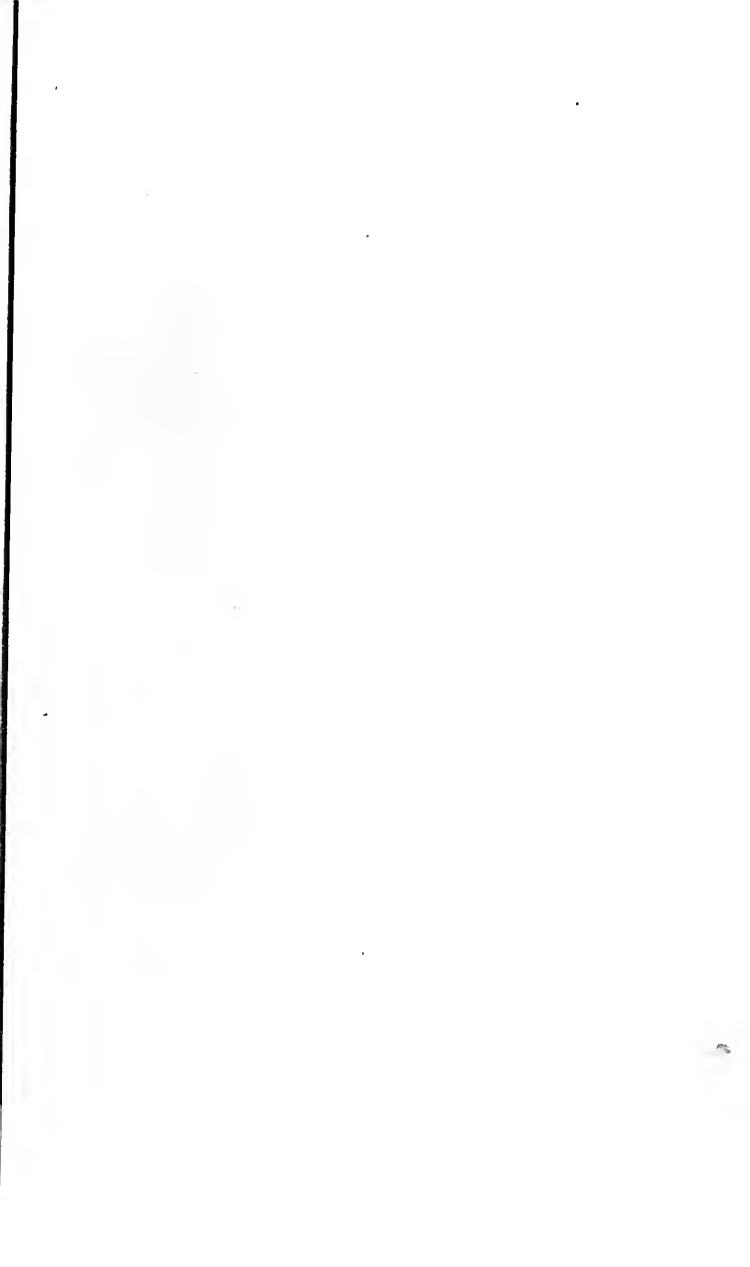
Minero. Under-ground captain.

- Minero Mayor.* Chief miner.
- Molineros.* Men employed in crushing ore with the stamps or molinos.
- Molinete.* Shaft of tina.
- Molino.* The stamping or crushing machine.
- Mulero.* Chief muleteer.
- Noria.* Machine for raising water.
- Pala.* Spade of wood.
- Palero.* Timber-man ; from *Palo* (wood).
- Palero Mayor.* Chief timber-man.
- Parada.* A relief or change of men, mules, or horses.
- Parihuela.* Hand-barrow.
- Patio.* The amalgamation-floor.
- Péon.* Labourer.
- Peon.* Shaft of horizontal grand wheel.
- Pepena.* Picked ore.
- Pico.* Sledge-hammer for breaking piña.
- Piña.* (See *Cuerpo*.)
- Platillo.* Small cog-wheel.
- Polvorero.* Powder-man.
- Portero.* Porter at the gate.
- Quebrador.* Ore-breaker.
- Quemador.* The burner and director of magistral.
- Quintal.* One hundred pounds weight.
- Ramplones.* Uprights.
- Rayador.* Grass captain, or accountant.

- Reatas.* Cords used for lashings.
- Repasadores.* Men who turn over the tortas or drive the horses in the repaso.
- Rescate.* Purchase of ore.
- Rescatador.* Purchaser of ore.
- Sahuan.* The door of entrance.
- Sal Blanca.* Salt, or muriate of soda.
- Saltierra.* Salt mixed with earthy impurities. (See vol. i. page 195.)
- Tahona.* The grinding mill for the granza or crushed ore.
- Tahoneros.* Men who attend the grinding of the ore in the tahonas.
- Tajadera.* Wedge to break the tina.
- Tajamanil.* Thin wooden shingles for roofing.
- Tasas.* The bowls of the tahonas.
- Tequesquite.* Carbonate of soda.
- Tina.* The vat in which the amalgamated ores are washed to obtain the amalgam.
- Triangulo.* The cogs of the stamps.
- Valiente.* A substitute.
- Velador.* A watchman.
- Zorra.* A lad who attends the chief miner under ground.

THE END.





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